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EDITORIAL

WHY JOHNNY CAN'T SPEAK

The Reagan Administration's faith in the miracle of the free marketplace has never extended to the marketplace of ideas. There are no supply-siders among the Reaganites when it comes to the First Amendment.

Two developments in the past weeks further the Administration's constricted vision. The first is the Supreme Court's January 13 decision in *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier*, which concerned a principal's censorship of articles in the student newspaper about divorce and teenage pregnancy [see Steve Visser, "A Civics Lesson at Hazelwood East," *The Nation*, October 24, 1987]. The Court ruled, 5 to 3, that such action was justified as long as it was, in Justice Byron White's words, "reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns."

One of these concerns is that "readers or listeners are not exposed to material that may be inappropriate for their level of maturity." A second is that a school not be associated "with any position other than neutrality on matters of public controversy."

Thus the Court seems to hold that students must be protected from troubling facts and that public debate on important issues should be kept from the schools. A similar approach to education can be seen in Secretary of Education William Bennett's endorsement of Joe Clark, the Paterson, New Jersey, principal who raised test scores and "improved" discipline at Eastside High School by expelling slow students. Attacked by the school board for his violations of policy and state law, Clark was offered (although he declined) a job in the Administration.

In this philosophy of education, schools have no place for either difficult ideas or difficult kids. High-school students are not the only losers here; so is society itself, whose next generation is being raised in the atmosphere of the New Chill.

JACK KEMP
Andrew Kopkind

CONTRA JOURNALISM
Alexander Cockburn

HUTCHINS'S CENTER
W.H. Ferry
Stanley K. Sheinbaum
Harry S. Ashmore
Michael Harrington

THE MIRANDA SHOW
Robert Parry

THE NEW REAGANOMICS
Jeff Faux

LETTER FROM LONDON

THATCHER'S INGLORIOUS REVOLUTION

GEORGE BLACK

London

Years that start life as official anniversaries are to be approached with caution. The British establishment is now lumbering into position to mark the tricentennial of the Glorious Revolution of 1688, the year that brought the final triumph of Protestantism, visiting slaughter on the Irish Catholics; the flourishing of empire amid a spate of foreign wars; and an established parliamentary monarchy—but no constitution. The United States celebrates its Constitution, Britain its lack of one.

The Glorious Revolution was about finding the monarchy's proper place in society. But it's hard these days to tell where real royalty lies—with the official royal family, which increasingly inhabits the gossip pages of Britain's sleazier tabloid dailies, or with Thatcher herself, who ushered in the new year by striding past Herbert Asquith's record eight years and 243 days in office (from 1908 to 1916) to become the longest-serving Prime Minister of this century. On January 4 she headed off for a five-day trip to Africa, which looked, on the BBC, uncannily like a royal visit of the 1950s, with the monarch and her consort (Dennis Thatcher, looking more than ever like a puppet from the wickedly funny show *Spitting Image*) standing in an open car and greeting phalanxes of colorful natives waving Union Jacks. In Kenya she made approving noises about President Daniel arap Moi's dismal human rights record; in Nigeria she got along famously with the country's dictator, Gen. Ibrahim Babangida, even though the occasion was blemished by Nigerian protests over Thatcher's unbending opposition to sanctions against South

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LETTERS.

PRESENT AT THE CREATION

Toronto

As one of the organizers of the upcoming National Student Convention, I'd like to express my thanks for your recent article on our efforts [Maria Margaronis, "A New New Left on Campus," Dec. 19, 1987]. In our work to create this organization, I think we all feel a bit like expectant mothers. We live in anticipation of the birth, get preoccupied trying to come up with a name, fantasize about how this organization will grow, what characteristics will emerge, what it will become. One of the organizers quoted in the article correctly observed that we can't determine a priori what his organization will be before all of us get together to build it. That's part of the excitement.

Our self-consciousness about Students for a Democratic Society is another of our strengths. Before I met the Rutgers University organizers, I thought I was alone in my preoccupation with S.D.S. history and my conviction that a solid understanding of that history was crucial to student activists today. Our sense of connection to S.D.S. should also, I hope, jog former S.D.S.ers into action. We need their support, advice, financial assistance—we need their attention.

Students can do a lot to create the Next Left or the New New Left (or whatever we end up calling this new thing in front of us), but I don't think any one of us is as arrogant as to suppose that we can do it on our own. Margaronis's article has certainly helped us. But she left out the most important bit of information, our address: National Student Convention '88, 69 Welton Street, Second Floor, New Brunswick, NJ 08901; (201) 828-6757, office; (201) 745-5885, hotline update.

Aniko Bodroghkozy

DON'T BLAME THE DEMS

New York City

Doug Henwood is pretty severe in reviewing Robert Kuttner's *The Life of the Party* in your November 28, 1987, number. I haven't read Kuttner's book, but I think Henwood should get his facts straight before reading the riot act to the Democratic Party in derogation of Kuttner's thesis. Henwood states: "And there are plenty of things the Democrats *can* be blamed for. . . . It was Harry Truman and the allegedly progressive postwar Democratic Congress that passed the Taft-Hartley bill and other repressive legislation designed to limit unionism to the narrowest of goals." I thought that Robert Taft and Fred Hartley were Republicans. I thought it was the Republican Congress elected in 1946, the Congress *against* which Harry Truman ran in 1948, that passed the Taft-Hartley act in 1947. And I thought Harry Truman vetoed Taft-Hartley, which was then passed over his veto by Republicans and Southern Democrats.

While I'll agree with Henwood that the postwar Democratic Party was not an ideal of progressivism, the anti-labor aspects of Taft-Hartley should not be laid at the Democrats' door.

Arthur S. Leonard

HENWOOD REPLIES

New York City

Oops. Leonard is right; I misread my source. What I should have said is that Truman and the "liberal" Congress of 1948 (not 1946) failed to *repeal* Taft-Hartley, shelved national health insurance, yielded to construction interests by substituting mortgage subsidies for public housing and forgot the civil rights promises in the 1948 platform. But labor didn't have to wait until 1949 for Truman to unveil his Raw Deal. As Mike Davis—whose facts I misread—wrote in *Prisoners of the American Dream*, Truman responded to the 1946 strike wave "by enjoining the miners, threatening to conscript the railroad workers, and calling for broad repressive powers." In 1952, Jack Kroll, head of the Congress of Industrial Organizations' political action committee, complained that despite unionists' heroic work for Democratic candidates, the C.I.O. still found itself bargaining with the party "much as it would with an employer." My main point—that the Democrats have a long history of betraying working people—remains unchallenged. Still, if you're going to fulminate, you should get your facts straight; I didn't on this point, and I'm sorry.

Doug Henwood

BURY THE WIPP

Albuquerque, N.M.

Midwestern opposition to temporary storage of commercial low-level nuclear waste stands in sharp contrast to the reaction in New Mexico, the state that will soon become the first permanent home for the nation's low-level and transuranic military nuclear waste [see Dick Russell, "Fighting the Nuke-Waste Shell Game," Nov. 21, 1987]. The Waste Isolation Pilot Project (WIPP) is near Carlsbad, a mining town suffering high unemployment. The Department of Energy project is a technical and legal nightmare. But since New Mexico is heavily dependent on Defense and D.O.E. spending, there has been little organized resistance to WIPP.

The site is a mine in the bedded salt formation in the southeast corner of the state. It was selected because dry salt was considered a great place to bury radioactive waste. As it turns out, about 2,000 gallons of water leak into WIPP each day, and last-minute D.O.E. modifications to the storage plan are unlikely to isolate the waste adequately. Turned into a radioactive slurry by exposure to hot brine under pressure, the waste might well be forced into the aquifer above the site. Mine shafts and boreholes that pass through the aquifer are to be plugged in a procedure D.O.E. hasn't yet invented.

WIPP is exempt from the major Federal laws governing nuclear waste disposal, and thus escapes Nuclear Regulatory Commission licensing and oversight procedures and requirements for extensive D.O.E. consultation with the state about the site. Former Governor Toney Anaya's administration stipulated that WIPP must meet Environmental Protection Agency safety standards. These standards were recently judged too lax by the U.S. Court of Appeals, which ordered the E.P.A. to devise new ones. Meanwhile, D.O.E. is planning to put 15 percent of the waste in place *before* demonstrating compliance with any E.P.A. standards, lax or not. That's 120,000 barrels of radioactive material, which will have to be pulled out of the mine after five years if E.P.A. compliance cannot be shown.

Opponents of WIPP face formidable obstacles: shifting Federal and state authority; policies that change with each new Federal and state administration; a population dependent on the military and D.O.E.; the widespread belief that all things nuclear are good for the economy. So great is this conviction that Governor Garrey Carruthers recently offered New Mexico as a permanent site for high-level waste. (He withdrew the offer after meeting with the state's Congressional delegation, which is struggling to reach agreement on riders to the bill that will permanently assign WIPP land to the Federal government.)

Environmentalists are now working to organize residents of the towns through which nuclear waste will travel on its way to WIPP. Money for highway improvements and bypasses has not materialized, nor has the promised special training for public safety officers who will have to deal with the inevitable transport accident. Community activists hope to force public officials to delay opening the site until all safety issues, including compliance with new E.P.A. standards, are resolved. Otherwise, nuclear waste will begin arriving at WIPP within a year.

Debra Rosenthal

CORRECTION

Two sentences in Micah Sifry's report on the Palestinian situation ["Eyeless in Gaza," Jan. 16] were garbled. The sentence describing Shimon Peres's position should have read, "So far, the best that Shimon Peres has managed is an attack on the Likud for neglecting the so-called Jordanian option, a neglect that Peres fears will leave no alternative but negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organization." The sentence regarding the Yesh Gvul member who has been imprisoned should have read, "One of their number has been given a twenty-eight-day jail sentence."

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EDITORIALS.

Steps to Peace

For the first time in many years, it seems possible that three of the world's most heated arguments can be ended by talking rather than fighting. Nicaragua's President Daniel Ortega has made significant concessions to the Central American peace plan—the Esquipulas II process—in an effort to stop continued U.S. intervention in Latin America. Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev has suggested a timetable, of a sort, for leaving Afghanistan by the end of this year. And the unexpected uprising of Palestinians in and around Israel has emboldened Palestine Liberation Organization chair Yasir Arafat again to offer recognition, in the clearest language yet, of Israel's right to existence in exchange for negotiations about self-governance for the Arabs.

It will be hard for the Sandinistas to sit down with Somoza's thugs and the *contra* butchers, but talks may be Nicaragua's best hope to stop the next round of military resupply from the United States. Not that the concessions guarantee U.S. compliance with Esquipulas II. The mendacious Elliott Abrams, Assistant Secretary of State, will do everything he can to impose impossible conditions, find new provocations and disregard promises in order to allow President Reagan to make good on his pledge to overthrow Nicaragua before he leaves office.

The Soviet Union entered Afghanistan in late 1979, elev-

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en months after the revolution in neighboring Iran, with mixed motives of paranoia and *Realpolitik*, to maintain a friendly government at a time of enormous upheaval in the region lying on its southern flank. When Jimmy Carter's own realpolitician, Zbigniew Brzezinski, began covert operations to arm Afghan rebels, he justified the intervention with a bit of paranoia of his own: the fear that Leonid Brezhnev was preparing to move south into that historically elusive "warm water port" in the Persian Gulf. That geopolitical rationale—and Reagan's subsequent liberationist boilerplate about "freedom fighters" and "democratic resistance"—was meant as cover for America's mission, which was the projection of power in the seething area.

Now the United States has its armada in the gulf and the Soviet Union is bogged down in a no-win war that could become as bad for it as Vietnam was for this country. Gorbachev wisely wants to cut his losses, but he cannot do so if Reagan continues to arm the mujahedeen. Once again, the United States commands a lever to peace that it refuses to pull.

If there is any place where an American administration can, with little more than a stroke of a pen, stop people from fighting it is in Israel and the occupied territories. This is the time for the United States, as a start, to press for an international peace conference of representative Palestinian, Israeli and Arab leaders. Israel decided long ago to make itself entirely dependent on American money and arms. It could not survive for long without its daily fix. That's another lever that is America's to pull.

CUSTOMS: NATION 'SUBVERSIVE'

Last week, fourteen copies of *The Nation* were impounded by vigilant U.S. Customs Service agents near El Paso. The magazines belonged to Jim MacKenzie, who had packed them, along with fifteen copies of *The Guardian* and one each of *Latin America Press Bulletin* and *The Threepenny Review*, in a bag containing medical supplies destined for Nicaragua, where MacKenzie was going to work with the New Mexico Construction Brigade.

According to Susan Baus of El Paso, on January 17 she and her husband, James Watson, drove MacKenzie to Juarez, Mexico, to catch a plane to Mexico City. Learning that the connecting flight to Managua was delayed, MacKenzie decided to leave the following day instead.

On their way home, they were stopped at the border, and Customs officers began searching MacKenzie's luggage. When the officers spotted the medical supplies, they "started to get very upset," Baus said. One of them leafed through a copy of *The Nation*. "This material is subversive," he said. "It can't be taken into the country." Told that *The Nation* is published in the United States, he replied, "I don't care." The upshot was that MacKenzie's medicine was returned but not his publications. Later, Customs officer Vince Casillas explained that the magazines "were not seized, they were detained." Say *what*?

Kemp's People

Bedford, New Hampshire

It is evening in Ronald Reagan's America. A new home in an executive/professional housing tract near Manchester, New Hampshire, casts its light like a beacon through the trees of a young wood. Well-dressed couples slip-slide along a glazed pathway skirting a snowy lawn and unbundle themselves in the warm kitchen. A party is in progress, in more ways than one. The fireplaces are aglow, the carpets are plush, the tables are laid with rich confections, cheese and wine. Women drip coffee from sterling samovars into Wedgwood cups. The obligatory golden retriever weaves among the guests. Commissioned portraits of the children, a framed wedding announcement from the 1960s and a diploma issued by a French cooking school hang in conspicuous sites on the papered walls. The host and many of the men are doctors. Several wear beepers on their belts, which periodically discharge, sending the doctors to the phone. They talk of life and death, or at least of comfort and pain. In the front hallway, which for the moment serves as a stump for Republican presidential candidate Jack Kemp, the talk is about gold and oil, interest rates and taxes. The conversations seem eerily connected.

A man of 40 who is not a doctor but an engineer is eager to give his opinion of the candidate. "I'm not for Kemp, at least not yet," he says, balancing loaded cookie plate, full cup and saucer with practiced grace. "I believe in every issue he has, including and especially 'hard money'—I'm a hard-money man myself—but he doesn't have charisma. I was always conservative, but I was for J.F.K.—he had charisma." When pressed, he is unable to define that magic quality. "Maybe we need to break out of politics and politicians," he concludes. "I'm thinking about Pat Robertson."

A year or two ago, many Republicans believed that Kemp would have the young conservative vote sewed up long before the primary poll in New Hampshire. The 52-year-old former quarterback and nine-term Representative from upstate New York was an early ideologue and political instigator of the movement that formed the foundation for Reagan's victory in 1980. Kemp's particular promotion was the package of supply-side inducements to expansion that George Bush memorialized eight years ago as "voodoo economics" and that is now flogged by policy hucksters throughout the capitalist world. The "Kemp-Roth" tax cuts became the defining achievement of Reaganism.

Kemp takes some credit for the gloss of the age he helped conceive and organize, but now he seems saddled by his success. "Supply-side economics has become an albatross around his neck," a longtime supporter told me. "He's known as the expert on economics among the [Republican] candidates, but the average voter doesn't want to think about economics unless he's hurting, which he's not in New Hampshire." The state has the lowest unemployment rate in

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the country, if not the Western world, and Republican voters are eminently well-heeled. But what's worse for Kemp is that Republicans who do worry about economics in the abstract are more concerned about the present danger of the Federal deficit and the distant threat of inflation than in the promise of expansion, which is Kemp's hobbyhorse.

"We could be entering a golden age," Kemp exclaims on the hustings, pun always intended. He tells chamber-of-commerce breakfasts, high-school assemblies and executive seminars that the recent contradictions of capitalism in America (not his phrasing, of course) come from the incomplete application of Kemponomics (not his word, either). The Reagan tax cut was the first shoe to drop. The world is now waiting for interest rates to come down, savings to rise, investments to increase and the next great wave of growth to break.

Doctors and engineers and high-tech execs have been attentive to Kemp's message and often sympathetic to his prescriptions, which include a return to some kind of gold standard, a drastic reduction in the capital gains tax and the consignment of the current management of the Federal Reserve Board to a very low circle of hell. But the voters are not rallying around his standard in the numbers anyone once expected. The Manchester *Union-Leader*, perhaps the most aggressively reactionary major newspaper in the country, surprised everybody by endorsing Pete du Pont. Its campaign for Reagan in 1980 probably won him the state and gave him the "big mo" to get the nomination. But neither are the numerous right-wing yuppies—Kemp's natural constituency, by virtue of his age and haircut—clambering aboard his train.

"There's a split in the conservative movement," Kemp told me one morning in Concord, on the run from a radio interview to the airport, with a stop-off at Kentucky Fried Chicken ("We don't go to McDonald's anymore after Joan Kroc [founder Ray Kroc's widow] gave a million bucks to unilateral disarmament or something"). "One part of it is concerned with Communism, big spending, family values and so forth. The other takes activist positions and advocates changes that address real world problems. It's the entrepreneurial wing. Barry Goldwater, God bless him, was more a critic. I intellectually helped start the conservative movement and I'm more of an activist. Now, I don't want to get Hegelian about it, but in '80 we were the antithesis to the old policies that didn't work. We presented a new thesis.

"Reagan held the two wings together, but remember that in 1980 he wasn't the only conservative in the primaries. [Illinois Representative Philip Crane was in the race, and George Bush was bidding for the right as well.] Reagan didn't galvanize conservatives until after New Hampshire." Kemp hopes that he will follow in his spiritual father's footsteps.

The fact is that the heart of the right is still beating to the drum of anger and frustration. Kemp gives some lip service to its concerns about godless atheistic Communism, abortion and the lying liberal media, but his eye is clearly on the golden age, not the apocalypse. Robertson's biblical eschatology is more appealing to the ideologues of the fragmented conservative movement than are Kemp's Hegelian formulations. Kemp cuts down his "charisma" when he talks about Malthus, Hobbes and Adam Smith as if they were his contemporaries on the political scene.

Many on the right worry that Kemp is soft on blacks. Race was certainly the subliminal issue of 1980, and Reagan signified, if he never stated, the antithesis to black power. Kemp voted for sanctions against South Africa, to the absolute horror of *The Union-Leader* and *The National Review*, and he wants to bring minorities into a new Republican majority. Those positions have lost him a lot of "major, major money, especially in Texas," a leading New Hampshire Republican confided. Those in the Plastic Generation do not want to enter the golden age with people they wouldn't invite to their cookie table. ANDREW KOPKIND

Detention U.S.A.

Recently, Judge Vladimir Terebilov, the Soviet Union's highest ranking judge, called for limiting pretrial detention to a maximum of six months. This reform, if enacted, would place the Soviet Union far ahead of the United States and in line with the more enlightened criminal jurisdictions of the world. The United States is one of the few large countries (the others are Chile and South Africa) that permit indeterminate detention of people not convicted of a crime, thanks to the Bail Reform Act of 1984.

At a time when Reagan is lecturing the Soviet Union on human rights, the longest pretrial detention in American history—now more than twenty-eight months—is taking place. The prisoners are two residents of Puerto Rico who were arrested there on August 30, 1985, and brought to Hartford, where they face charges of conspiracy and planning a robbery. The government claims both are members of Los Macheteros, a clandestine organization operating in Puerto Rico that favors independence from the United States.

One of the two prisoners, Juan Segarra Palmer, whose petition for release has been pending for six months in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, is a most unlikely candidate for incarceration as a danger to the community. Segarra is a 38-year-old father of two who had never been arrested previously. He attended Phillips Academy and Harvard University. A relative, Muñoz Marin, served as Governor of Puerto Rico for twenty-six years. His father, a member of the bar of Puerto Rico, has offered to put up his life's assets as bail. Hiram Cancio, a retired chief judge in the Federal District of Puerto Rico, and Segarra's lawyer have offered their services as "monitors" if Segarra is released on bail. But Assistant District Attorney Albert Dabroski has turned them down.

Segarra's attempts to get out of jail make a bizarre story. Seven of his sixteen co-defendants were released soon after their arrest. By October 1986, seven more had been released on bail because of the extraordinary length of time it was taking to bring the case to trial. The Court of Appeals mandated the release on the ground that the prosecution's inordinate delay offended due process.

Although Segarra and his remaining co-defendant were

(*Continued on Page 118*)

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BELTWAY BANDITS.

DAVID CORN
JEFFERSON MORLEY

■ Chiles's Big Chill

Thanks to Senator Lawton Chiles, it's an even colder winter for many low-income Americans. Right before Congress took its Christmas break, Chiles, as chair of an appropriations subcommittee, "won" a $300 million cut in the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which helps the needy meet their heating bills.

Last summer the House voted to freeze the program at $1.82 billion, but the Senate, at Chiles's urging, adopted the Administration's figure of $1.24 billion, a 32 percent slash. The difference between the House and Senate levels had to be resolved in conference. Prior to the December meeting, forty-nine Senators sent Chiles a letter asking him to accept the House figure. The "average annual income of the recipient household is less than $6,500," they wrote. "Almost 40% of these recipients are low-income senior citizens. Many others are the working poor. . . . The average annual LIHEAP income supplement of about $208 means a great deal to these people, who too often must make the choice between heating and eating." The reduction, they said, marked "the largest annual percentage cut of any low-income support program since 1982." It had been approved by a Senate controlled, for the first time in six years, by Democrats.

Chiles wasn't convinced. In conference, he forced a compromise and split the budgetary difference between the versions, which reduced the program by 16 percent. That still means trouble for the states that run the heating assistance programs. "Pennsylvania is projecting running out of money in February, and Kentucky may not be able to serve huge chunks of its recipients," said Charles Hill, managing attorney at the National Consumer Law Center.

Why did Chiles take such a hard line on LIHEAP? For years he has been a conscientious deficit-watcher. But, as LIHEAP advocates pointed out, this program probably has the least impact in Florida, the state that sent Chiles, a Democrat, to the Senate.

■ Up in Arms

For the past thirteen years, Ruth Leger Sivard has been tracking the dismaying trends in global military spending, in the annual report she produces, *World Military and Social Expenditures.* In the 1987-88 edition, which was just released, Sivard, a former official of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, reports that military outlays worldwide were roughly $930 billion in 1987, up from $880 billion in 1986.

Other not-so-fun facts from the chart-filled new edition (published by World Priorities of Washington) include:

§ The world's annual military budget equals the income of 2.6 billion people in the forty-four poorest nations.

§ More wars were fought in 1987 than in any previous year in history; 80 percent of the dead in these conflicts were civilians.

§ The United States spent an extra $365 million in 1987 to protect Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf; that's about three times as much as the government appropriated for research on energy conservation.

§ The budget of the Central Intelligence Agency—estimated to have been $25 billion in 1986—is as large as the total military budget of France or West Germany.

Most depressing is Sivard's effort to show how money spent on weapons could be put to better uses. She notes, for instance, that a single Trident submarine could be traded in for a five-year program of universal child immunization against six deadly diseases, which would prevent 1 million deaths a year. Though the statistics she has compiled give good cause for despair, Sivard offers a few reasons for optimism, including the following: In this century, those parties starting wars have won 39 percent of the conflicts. But in the 1980s, those who fired the first shot appear to be the winners in only 11 percent of the cases.

■ Heritage's Escape

Was there a quickening of the pulse at the Heritage Foundation last year, when officials of the think tank learned that the Iran/*contra* committees' investigators had obtained a subpoena for Heritage documents? If so, it did not last long.

Recall that evidence produced by the committees during the hearings showed that Heritage had laundered $100,000 for a private *contra* support network tied to Lieut. Col. Oliver North. Discovery of that transaction piqued the interest of some committee staff members, and a subpoena was issued for internal Heritage records, according to one committee aide. But it was quashed before it could be put to use, the source said. The reason for the turnaround? Republican pressure designed to steer the committees away from probing the role played by conservative foundations and organizations in the White House covert *contra* support campaign.

■ Meese's Next Scandal: You Pick It

It is a new year for all of us—including Attorney General Edwin Meese 3d. So let's forget for the moment that our chief law-enforcement officer currently is being investigated by two special prosecutors and instead look ahead. Specifically, what new scandals await Meese in 1988? You decide. Did Meese obtain an interest-free loan from Panamanian strongman Gen. Manuel Noriega? Does his blind trust hold shares in the nation's leading manufacturers of drug-testing paraphernalia? Will we learn that Meese "forgot to read" a memorandum sent to him regarding Colombian cocaine cartel payments to the *contras*? Will we discover that Wedtech shipped guns to the Afghan rebels? Will his wife be caught scalping complimentary Olympics tickets in Seoul? Send us your best guesses. They will be judged for creativity, plausibility and deniability. The winning entries will appear here and be forwarded to an independent counsel to be named later.

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I, Odious

EDWARD SOREL

WOW!! LOOK AT THOSE REAL ESTATE GUYS GO AT IT!
BUT ENOUGH ALREADY. HOW ABOUT SOME MOO GOO GAI PAN?
BUT, ODIOUS, DON'T YOU WANT TO SEE WHO WINS?
DOESN'T MATTER. THEY'RE ALL CONTRIBUTORS.
THERE SEEMS TO BE A LOT MORE HOMELESS NOW, ODIOUS.
JUST IGNORE 'EM
THERE'S AN AWFUL LOT OF CRIME, ODIOUS.
JUST WALK FASTER
ODIOUS, HOW COME THERE ARE SO MANY SCHOOL DROPOUTS?
GOT ME.
WHAT!
GOSH, THEY'VE RAISED THE PRICE OF MOVIES.
THEY CAN'T DO THAT!! I'LL CLOSE 'EM DOWN!! I'LL BURN 'EM TO THE GROUND! I'LL THROW 'EM TO THE LIONS!
SOME THINGS I JUST WON'T TOLERATE!
Edward Sorel

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

War on Peace: Kenia and 'The Times'

"Where were you hurt?" a journalist asked 6-year-old Kenia Rodríguez, who was lying on a stretcher waiting to be evacuated to Managua on the same plane on which he and his colleagues had arrived.

"In my feet," she answered calmly. Under the sheet covering her, she had no feet, only carefully bandaged stumps at the ends of her legs. "My grandmother was killed, and my aunt was injured," she added, still very solemn, as photographers crowded in for a shot.

Kenia lost her feet when *contras* mortared the town of Siuna on the Sunday before Christmas and hit her house. Residents said the mortaring was indiscriminate. Beside Kenia lay someone whose face was speckled black and gray with shrapnel wounds and who could not speak. Next was a young doctor shot when *contras* sprayed the ambulance in which he was riding with automatic rifle fire. The doctor with him had been killed. All were being taken for better care to Managua.

The Nicaraguan government called the attack on this and two neighboring mining towns in the northeast of the country "propagandistic," meaning that it was intended to impress Congress rather than to have any lasting military impact. Phyllis Oakley at the State Department called the attacks a "100 percent success."

Anxious to answer the Reagan Administration, which applauded the strike as a signal of *contra* military effectiveness, the Nicaraguan government started flying journalists to the site early Tuesday morning, December 22, two days after the attack. It need not have bothered, for it was Siuna's misfortune to be hit twice that week. The second attack came on Friday, Christmas Day, when James LeMoyne landed a story on the front page of *The New York Times*. The *contras*, he wrote, had launched their "largest and most successful military operation of the war," occupying the mining towns of Siuna for a whole day and of Bonanza for "almost two." This was news indeed, including for many of the journalists who were there at the same time as LeMoyne.

The Reagan Administration had clearly hoped that the long-awaited occupation of a town would shake loose votes in Congress from those who, not bothered by the provision of the Guatemala accords that specifically rules out aid to the *contras*, wonder whether the *contra* war yields value for money. "Why can't they take a town?" senators demanded insistently last February in Foreign Relations Committee hearings. LeMoyne's story therefore announced exactly what the Administration had wanted to hear and assisted in the U.S. politico-military attack on the accords.

Rewriting the Accords

Before continuing any further with the fateful conjunction of the *contras*, Siuna and LeMoyne, we should step back and look at the larger picture, in which, with the summit in Costa Rica over the weekend of January 15, the Reagan Administration has successfully finessed—though "finesse" is scarcely the word for the strong-arm tactics actually employed—the possibility that the Guatemala accords might inconvenience its plans in Central America. This would have been impossible without the supportive role played by the mainstream U.S. press and, above all, *The New York Times*. It is one of those moments in history, as in the reporting of the Paris accords on Vietnam in 1973, when the performance of the press as accomplice and handservant of the state can be discerned in every turn of phrase.

Start with the signing of the Guatemala (or Arias) accords on August 7 of last year. From that instant, when the usually nebulous concept of a "peace process" began to assume concrete outline, *Times* reporting became increasingly attuned to the interests of the Administration and its *contras*. Remember first of all that a central feature of the accords was *simultaneity*, the stipulation that all five countries in the region would move jointly on implementing the provisions on reconciliation, cessation of support for insurgencies and so forth. Any serious reporting of the progress of the accords would therefore have looked at the performance of all five countries. But a search through available *Times* files from August 7 through January 18 found about one hundred stories on Nicaragua's compliance with the accords; half a dozen on El Salvador's; two on Honduras's; and none on Guatemala's.

This ignoring of simultaneity and the corresponding stress on Nicaragua was congenial to the Administration, since it suggested that everything depended on unilateral actions by Nicaragua. On October 26 Stephen Kinzer wrote, "Pressure is building on Nicaragua's Sandinista leaders to take two key steps" in order to comply with the plan: (1) to release large numbers of prisoners; (2) to open cease-fire talks directly with the *contras*. On January 18, after Nicaragua had submitted to those two key demands, LeMoyne wrote, "Mr. Ortega responded with a shrewd tactical move by making what were probably the minimum concessions he could offer." That same day Kinzer had a story remarking that "Mr. Ortega took the new steps toward compliance less than three weeks before Congress is scheduled to vote on new aid for the contras." So submission is translated into cynicism, and unilateral moves not even required by the accords—which do not call for blanket amnesty or for talks with armed irregular forces—are translated into compliance.

The fervent coverage of the *contras* in *The Times* has been widely noted. There was LeMoyne's October 4 meditation in the Sunday *Magazine* on the obstacles large and small—childlike faith in U.S. resolve, lack of political program—impeding the passionate but simple peasant fighters. A month later there was Lindsey Gruson's cover story on the welcoming emotions aroused by the *contras* on their forays into Nicaragua. And on December 29 there was LeMoyne's evocation, boxed and given special prominence by the editors, on the daily miseries of life for the Nicaraguan masses, "for whom strong belief, except in God, seems largely to have fled." Now we have the deep-sixing by *The Times* and almost all the mainstream press, with the exception of Peter Ford in *The Christian Science Monitor* for January 15, of

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

the International Commission on Verification and Follow-up (C.I.V.S.). This was the body charged with monitoring compliance with the accords.

Right before the Costa Rican summit the C.I.V.S. issued a unanimous report markedly sensitive to the delicate terrain over which it was proceeding. As one non-Central American official of the commission quoted by Ford said, "Our conclusions are vague because the Central Americans were involved in drawing them up, and Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala were watering them down all the way." For example, the report originally said that amnesties in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras were not effective because of the practice, in all three countries, of killing prisoners. This was ultimately changed to say that killing of prisoners was the practice of the countries' "previous governments," a phrase inserted at the insistence of the three culprits.

The commission did make one unequivocal statement:

> In spite of the exhortations of the Central American presidents the government of the United States of America maintains its policy and practice of providing assistance, military in particular, to the irregular forces operating against the government of Nicaragua. The definitive cessation of this assistance continues to be an indispensable requirement for the success of the peace efforts and of this Procedure as a whole.

This was reported by Ford, and Julia Preston made a slight mention of it in *The Washington Post*. LeMoyne, in an incredible lie, had only this to say about the C.I.V.S. report:

> A meeting of the verification commission ended last weekend with little agreement. The commission is made up of members of the United Nations, the Organization of American States, the so-called Contadora Group of Latin countries and the five Central American signers of the peace treaty.

That was it: completely false on the matter of "little agreement," since the document was a unanimous release; reprehensible in its failure to mention the explicit statement against U.S. aid.

The final C.I.V.S. report should not have discommoded the Administration's four proxy states in Central America, yet they have effectively put an end to the commission by rejecting its chief operational recommendation—namely, the institution of verification procedures that could be somewhat objective in evaluating all the countries' compliance. The report suggested that teams from the U.N. and the O.A.S. might be set up to carry out on-site inspections. This is unacceptable to the United States, so it is unacceptable to its dependencies; therefore, the summit in Costa Rica ended with El Salvador and Honduras refusing any outside presence and saying that only the presidents of the countries could decide whether they were complying. With the burial of the international commission the Administration has succeeded in eliminating every independent actor who might mediate in Central America, this campaign beginning with the scuttling of Contadora and ending with the total exclusion of non-client states from the "peace process."

So much for the larger picture; now back to Siuna.

What Did He See? Where Did He See It?

LeMoyne was not the only journalist to visit Siuna just before Christmas. Among those making the trip was Mark Cook, the person inquiring of little Kenia Rodríguez where she had been hurt. Cook has been living in Nicaragua off and on since 1982, and permanently since 1985. He is a freelance journalist, *inter alia* sending reports to WBAI's "Contragate" program. What follows is essentially his commentary on the attack, and on LeMoyne's coverage of it.

Problematic for LeMoyne was that there is no material evidence that the *contras* did occupy the town, and plenty that they did not. "For reasons that are not clear," LeMoyne wrote, "they did not destroy several heavy trucks and the mine works here. They also failed to attack or shell the headquarters of the 366th Sandinista Army Brigade, even though it was immediately in front of them."

The reason was clear enough to residents whom Cook and other journalists interviewed. The *contras* did not occupy the town; they mortared it from surrounding hills. They did enter two barrios and briefly passed one entrance to the huge mine during the fighting, but fled when shooting picked up. They forced terrified people who had taken refuge in the La Luz church to chant *contra* slogans while a film crew recorded the event, residents report. (Most in Siuna's population of 7,500 are mine workers, and strongly pro-Sandinista.)

LeMoyne quotes one of his sources as saying that people "implored the rebels not to destroy the mine works, a major source of work here." Probably they did. Did the Sandinista Army commanders also implore them not to destroy the army command post, which is in the center of town?

"Ten residents said in separate interviews," LeMoyne goes on, "that the rebels held the town for about eight hours and walked around the center talking to civilians. They said there was no looting or abuse of civilians." What was the Sandinista Army doing during all this time? LeMoyne's article doesn't say, but on the plane taking him and the other reporters back to Managua, he said he had been told that forty Sandinistas had been killed on the outskirts of the town and the rest had fled, leaving the *contras* to have the run of the town. But how could they have fled, since, according to LeMoyne, the *contras* had attacked the village from five directions? Witnesses other journalists spoke with said fighting continued without interruption.

As for abuses, LeMoyne conceded at the end of his story that "the rebels appear to have won few friends in the towns by causing so many civilian casualties"—nineteen killed and one hundred wounded. He did not report that people living in an isolated cooperative a few miles outside of town told journalists that the *contras*, unable to find the residents, who were hiding, destroyed most of their food supply, setting fire to bags of rice and bayoneting cans of lard that went rancid in the heat. In another incident, they opened fire on civilians hiding in a tunnel, killing two adults and five children.

"The rebels occupied Siuna and Bonanza, where they engaged government troops and destroyed an important radar station, a large arms and munitions warehouse, . . . among

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other targets," LeMoyne wrote. Those two targets, however, were not, as is implied, inside the town. The radar was on a high hill almost a mile from Siuna, from which the *contras* were raining down mortars, and the weapons warehouse, which he did not visit, was about three and a half miles outside the town. Their destruction does not support his claim that the *contras* occupied Siuna. On the contrary, the extraordinary violence inflicted by the *contras* on the outskirts of the town and the indiscriminate mortaring of residential districts suggests the usual *contra* tactic of molesting relatively unprotected areas. LeMoyne's claim that Siuna was occupied is rendered all the more bizarre given that residents were burying *contra* bodies in common graves while the journalists were in the town. Cook says that had *contras* been even temporarily in control they would have followed their invariable practice of burying the bodies separately and secretly, in respect for their fellows and for the sake of military security.

LeMoyne claims that reporters could not go to Siuna until Wednesday. Untrue. One batch of reporters flew from Managua to the site early Tuesday morning and were there when Cook, LeMoyne and the others arrived. That second contingent left Managua Tuesday afternoon, but because the landing strip at Siuna cannot handle a jet, the reporters had to fly to Puerto Cabezas and there wait for a propeller plane to go the rest of the trip. The government was trying to evacuate the wounded and fly in troops to pursue the retreating *contras*, thus the delay until Wednesday is hardly surprising.

LeMoyne also says that reporters were not allowed to visit Rosita or Bonanza and were permitted only a few hours in Siuna. Completely false, says Cook. The journalists, offered the opportunity to visit all three towns, asked to visit only one because they wanted to get back to Managua to file their stories on an already old event. The military imposed no restrictions on the visit to Siuna and provided trucks to take journalists where they wanted to go. Several asked and were taken to the destroyed arms and ammunition shed, considering it the best photo opportunity.

Despite the mortar attacks that "inadvertently" hit a lot of homes, LeMoyne considers it "credible" that the *contras* have "extensive support in this area" and that "local peasants provided them with key intelligence" to prepare the surprise attacks. "Accounts by soldiers and villagers indicate that the guerrillas dominate this zone of Zelaya Department." This is typical of *The Times*'s propaganda on behalf of the *contras*, recommending itself with the word "dominate" and avoiding any distracting facts: that Zelaya is thinly populated, thick with virgin forests, relatively undefended by Sandinista Army regulars and near to the *contras*' Honduras lifeline; also that in exercising their dominance the *contras* have twice kidnapped Sister Sandra Price, a Catholic nun from the United States in Siuna; that last year they kidnapped a pro-revolution lay churchworker, later found castrated and otherwise mutilated; that at about the same time they burned a Catholic mission to the ground.

Cook says that sympathy with the *contras* among what rural population there is has been declining, not increasing. Much of the rural area around the mines is populated by Sumu and Miskito Indians, whose support for U.S.-controlled forces has dropped off in recent years because of the government's Atlantic Coast autonomy project, which encompasses the mining region, and because of *contra* abuses, including those by the now virtually defunct Indian *contras*.

Safe in Their Servitude

Every now and again the artful accomplices of the Reagan Administration do a minor course correction to show an independent turn of mind. On January 20, LeMoyne cited "diplomats and Government officials" in Costa Rica as contending that the "peace treaty is in danger[!] of being converted into a series of demands directed only at Nicaragua." This is what Noam Chomsky calls "safe criticism," salve on a reality already savaged beyond recognition. Thus the occasional proposition that U.S. "plans" to continue aiding the *contras* "appear" to inhibit peace. Remember that since August 7, amid the near total silence of the mainstream press, the U.S. government has stepped up surveillance flights and dispatched, courtesy of the C.I.A. and in direct defiance of the Guatemala accords which it has pledged to uphold, cargo after cargo to the *contras*—two to three airdrops per day. One small component of those supplies probably blew off Kenia Rodríguez's feet. As she hobbles through life on her wooden stumps, she will have every right to blame the Free Press of the United States for being among those responsible for her condition.

EDITORIALS.

(*Continued From Page 113*)

not part of the appeal, they petitioned to be released on identical grounds. But in a Kafkaesque twist, a different panel of the same Court of Appeals reached a contrary decision, finding that the United States was not substantially responsible for the delay. Despite the fact that Segarra has now been in jail fourteen months beyond the rulings ordering the release of his co-defendants, the Court of Appeals has not yet decided Segarra's appeal of that decision.

As a result, five former heads of the Puerto Rican Bar Association, two former justices of the island's highest court and a former Attorney General of Puerto Rico have jointly filed a petition asking Amnesty International to intervene. The petition points out that Puerto Rico's Constitution forbids pretrial detention beyond six months.

Because the pretrial proceedings are still under way in a Connecticut Federal Court and further delays and a year-long trial are anticipated, it is probable that Juan Segarra Palmer will spend at least four years in jail before a jury determines whether he is guilty or innocent.

The Bail Reform Act of 1984 offends international standards of justice. It is one of the innovations of the Reagan Revolution that ought to be immediately repealed.

MARTIN GARBUS

Martin Garbus, a New York City trial lawyer, is the author of Traitors and Heroes *(Atheneum).*

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ARTICLES.

MEMORIES OF A DIALOGUE

Robert Hutchins's Platonic Grove

A few weeks ago the once world-renowned Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions (founded by Robert Hutchins on a Santa Barbara, California, hilltop in 1959 to carry on a continuing dialogue to clarify the issues involved in maintaining a free and just society) went out of business. More accurately, it passed on its name and mailing list to *New Perspectives Quarterly*, a Los Angeles–based small-circulation journal published by Stanley Sheinbaum, once an economics fellow on the center's staff.

The rise and decline of the center, the most ambitious project of the now-defunct Fund for the Republic, established with Ford Foundation money in 1952, can be seen as a case study in the limits of liberal philanthropy. For the fund could not have been inaugurated under more auspicious circumstances. It had a clear and noble mandate, to combat McCarthyism through civil liberties education; it had more than adequate funding, the Ford Foundation's $15 million grant, which in the early 1950s was no small piece of change. It also had the canny conception, pushed by W.H. Ferry, then the Ford Foundation public relations counselor, that it would have total independence (good for the foundation, imperative for the fund) and would spend itself out of business in five years, thus avoiding the temptations of bureaucracy and empire-building that beset so many philanthropic enterprises. In Hutchins—the *Wunderkind* former Chancellor of the University of Chicago, where he had abolished the football team, and dean of the Yale Law School, into which he helped inject a heavy dose of legal realism—it had a brilliant, charismatic leader with humanist values.

The Fund for the Republic got off to a good start, commissioning and publishing important studies on blacklisting, Communism and national attitudes toward the Communist "threat" and civil liberties (see John Cogley's *Report on Blacklisting*, and the survey conducted by Harvard professor Samuel Stouffer and his staff, which formed the basis of two articles in *Look* in March 1955). As the worst aspects of the political hysteria appeared to wane, the fund persuaded itself of the desirability and wisdom of forming a center where men and women could engage in the process of reason "free from the impositions of academic discipline and the need for livelihood." As Hutchins once put it, "The Center's prejudice is democracy; its operating procedure, the dialogue." And indeed, the high caliber of the people attracted to the center—William O. Douglas, Erich Fromm, Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich were not atypical participants—as well as the work produced by its full-time staff and visiting fellows seemed for a time to justify the original vision. Among the notable projects: Michael Harrington's astonishingly influential *The Other America*, which gave rise to the War on Poverty; Rexford Tugwell's heroic effort to rethink the Constitution; and the international convocations on Pope John XXIII's encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, which Frank Kelly, a center alumnus and its historian (*Court of Reason: Robert Hutchins and the Fund for the Republic*), claims "helped to bring about at least a temporary relaxation of tensions between the Soviet bloc and the Western nations headed by the United States."

And yet, before it was over, the dialogue had been polluted by the imperatives of fund-raising. Fellows and former fellows fell to bitterness and squabbling with one another. The center's staff and alumni were diverted by acrimonious litigation over back salaries, real estate and promises, real or imagined. And the center itself went through a bewildering series of incarnations, hiring and firing new directors, making and unmaking deals, opening an office in Chicago, contracting with the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* to rethink the organization of all human knowledge (to help pay the center's bills) and moving from its mansion on Eucalyptus Hill to the more mundane campus of the University of California, Santa Barbara, where it was rechristened, some years after Hutchins's death, the Robert Maynard Hutchins Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. The center's major upheaval came in 1969, when Hutchins dissolved and then "refounded" it, reappointing himself and an additional fellow, the two agreeing to a third, etc., until a total of six were chosen. This group approved the selection of twelve associates. Perhaps its low point came in 1975, when Alexander Comfort, a fellow and one of the world's leading gerontologists, had a falling-out with the center over whether the institution was entitled to royalties from his international best-seller *The Joy of Sex* and its sequel, *More Joy*, which either were or were not written while he was in residence there, depending on how you read the judge's opinion. Thus did Plato's symposium encounter Plato's Retreat.

Where did the center go right and where did it go wrong? What *is* the role of reason in the formation of moral imagination? What does this extraordinary experiment have to teach us? Such questions are posed by the quirky journey of this quintessential liberal think tank and by those who care about the values that inspired and sustained it. We invited several former centerites to think aloud about these matters and to ruminate on its legacy. —*Victor Navasky*

W.H. FERRY

When the center set up in Santa Barbara in September 1959 it was intended as a near-total change of life. We were to become reflective, not active; quiet, not noisy. Since 1954 we had been challenging McCarthyism. We had a simple-minded idea that if we let our fellow citizens know what was really going on, they would reject the Senator's pernicious works, which were poisoning American life.

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So the fund set out to tell them. We were investigative reporters and researchers turning the spotlight on the patriotic idiocies of the 1950s. We were barkers outside the Constitution's tent. We derided some but not all senators and representatives. We urged scorn for those in high and low places who declared that American institutions were riddled with Communists. We sought television time—unsuccessfully—to present Americans with the facts about so-called national security policies. A two-volume study of blacklisting disclosed the throttlehold of a few zealots in the entertainment industry, and the resultant destruction of thousands of jobs and reputations.

These activities produced quite a lot of furious response. It was not an easy time for the center's staff, for, with two or three exceptions, the directors of the fund cowered. There were occasional calls for the officers' resignations as Congressional committees threatened, Fulton Lewis Jr. imprecated, J. Edgar Hoover investigated and the Hearst press fulminated.

We ourselves—I mean Robert Hutchins and the staff of maybe eight or nine—had growing reservations about what we were doing. We were getting the information out—identifying the scalawags whose cold war blustering was frightening the natives. But no consequential anti-McCarthy clamor ensued.

Out of this dilemma came a basic issues program and soon thereafter the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. We turned away from activism and toward fundamentals. At this point Hutchins made a crucially wrong decision. It seemed to me plain enough that the men and women who had demonstrated their hell-raising capabilities for the fund were manifestly not the right people to sit around the philosophers' table in Santa Barbara. I strongly urged Hutchins to leave most of us in New York City and enlist a new crew of intellectual muscle to start up the new enterprise. He refused, and invited everyone in the New York office to the center's aerie in Santa Barbara. Perforce I became an intellectual in early 1959 between the thirty-fifth and thirty-fourth floors of the Lincoln Building in Manhattan. "As former Chancellor of a great university, I declare you henceforth an intellectual," Hutchins said, putting a hand on my shoulder and startling passengers on the elevator. Others were similarly raised in rank.

Thus arose a disability with which the center was born and that ultimately would lead to its decline. I am still surprised that the directors let him get away with taking to California the people who had caused them such distress for five years and who, moreover, had little claim to philosophical standing.

The decision illustrates one of Hutchins's considerable defects. He made it clear that he was being "loyal" to the staff, however deleterious it might be to the proclaimed outlook at the center. At that point—we still had $4 million to $5 million in the bank—he could have enlisted real intellectual firepower to get the center under way.

The basic issues program nonetheless gave the center a head start, which was used to advantage. Within a short time we were well known in California. We settled into a program of discussion and publication that cost $1 million or so a year, and it was worth the money. The center had an effect almost from the outset. Its occasional papers, reports, pamphlets and magazines were sometimes front-page news. The daily conversations at El Parthenon, as Hutchins baptized our Montecito mansion, attracted visitors and comment. Rich people came to gaze upon the famous people among our guests. Television producers tried, though without success, to put our ninety-minute dialogues on film. It was a heady place to work for most of those years, the atmosphere enhanced by Santa Barbara's endless amenities.

Despite its early assertions of monastic remoteness the center moved onto local and international stages with increasing confidence. We sought the reasons behind the noisy disaffection of the Free Speech Movement and Hispanic groups. Stimulated by Pope John XXIII, we assembled mighty minds from all over the place to celebrate his ***Pacem in Terris***, first in New York and later in Geneva. We worried about the impact of technology, occasioning numerous papers and arguments and a few appearances before Congressional committees. We contracted with ***Encyclopaedia Britannica*** to advise on the preparation of a new edition. With varying success we sought to elucidate racism, natural law, scientifically based ethics, education.

But the center was not the congress of philosophers of his own intellectual stature for which Hutchins yearned. These were the 1960s, and the center's agenda was dominated by the decade's stormy issues, from Vietnam to black/white eruptions. It was not Hutchins's preferred agenda. He was discomfited by the presence of blacks and other minorities at the green baize table. He discounted the University of California's Free Speech Movement, saying of the angry students, "They'll all be wearing three-piece suits to the office in a few years." The jangle and commotion of the times wore Hutchins down, so that by the mid-1960s he had perceptibly lost interest. His attention drifted off to his editorial chores for *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and other noncenter matters. Disintegration set in. The unspoken question was at last spoken: "Who will succeed Hutchins, and how?" Cracks widened in the center's collegial structure. Cliques formed and we sometimes seemed like peevish children. Hutchins's taste for adulation ripened into a taste for toadies, of which there was an adequate supply. Even the discussion of a new U.S. Constitution was not enough to hold together the scattering parties. The irony of such a discussion was plain to all of us, for we could not begin to agree on a constitution for the center itself.

Some such instrument was needed to provide for the succession when Hutchins resigned or died. He was the only thing we had in common: We all admired his mind and accomplishments and—until the breakup in late spring of 1969—his principles.

Hutchins's merits were many, and they concealed his numerous flaws from most of his followers. He was vain and stingy, and often had spectacularly bad judgment about people. He was cowardly, pushing unpleasant administrative chores on others. He seldom offered praise for work well done. These cracks in his character were evident during

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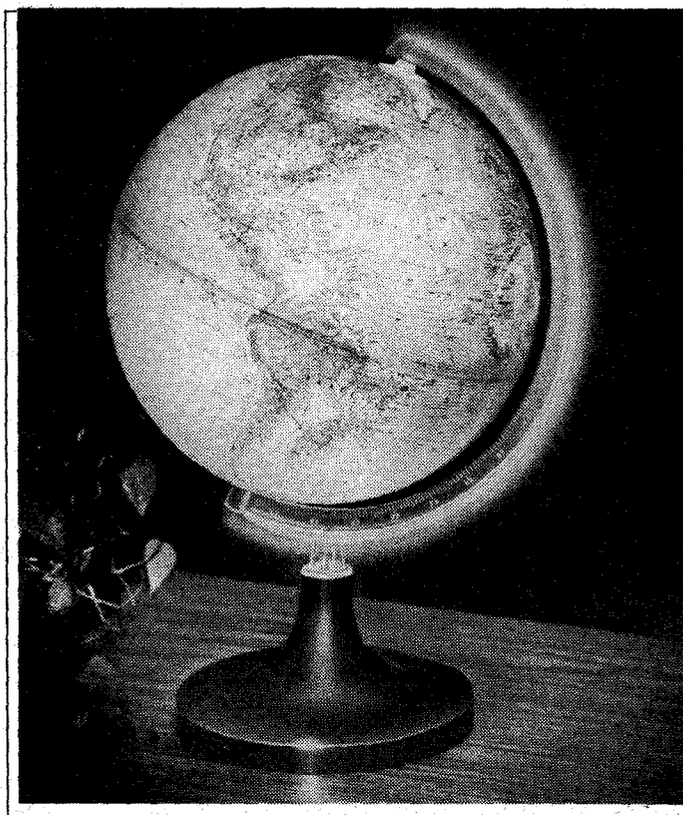

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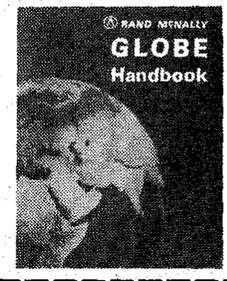

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the upheavals of June 1969, when the center re-formed, in the process diselecting or discharging a dozen or more of us.

This unhappy development brought my eighteen-year friendship with Hutchins to an end. Hutchins secluded himself and delegated the distasteful chores of severance to Harry Ashmore, who enjoyed the opportunity to serve writs of execution on so many for whom he had no affection.

The center survived Hutchins's death by eight years. A half-dozen or so presidents succeeded him. None had Hutchins's unquestionable leadership or intellectual authority. Institutions wear out, and no one should be blamed for the center's demise. While it lived it was a sometimes valiant effort to clear away nonsense and destructive influences in the national life.

W.H. Ferry is a social critic who was vice president of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions.

STANLEY K. SHEINBAUM

During the years the American taxpayer was spending more than $300 billion on an unexplainable war in Vietnam, wealthy Beverly Hills supporters of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions complained about its annual $1 million budget. My own take on that peculiar set of priorities was that $1 million was not an outlandish price to pay, even if the end result was only that a dozen or so fellows became educated—at least, that is, became experienced—in how to think. (That I was one of those fellows has nothing to do with the point.)

After all, ours is a society in which galloping pragmatism has increasingly been in the saddle (to metaphorically mix a metaphor, while splitting an infinitive) and in which, in our educational institutions, especially in the realm of social science and to a sad extent philosophy, the accumulation of facts has become the substitute for knowledge and wisdom. In *The Last Intellectuals* Russell Jacoby bemoans America's failure to develop a critical mass of intellectuals and intellectual thought. To the extent that he is right—and he is—we are aimless, nothing but adrift. Even the philosophers are arguing among themselves about whether the technical approach of the logical positivists has steered that ultimate field into an intellectual dead end.

During the 1960s I used to be amused when academicians scoffed at the nonscientific, normative methodology of the center. But so many of them, after even the shortest visit, would want to join us; they realized that the center was an interesting and worthwhile experiment. Robert Maynard Hutchins had the Platonic dream of assembling a core of intelligent and competent people and then relieving them of the responsibilities of careers and professionalism so that they could engage in an unfettered dialogue. Of course, such a collection could not ultimately survive in a society where worth is measured by objective results. When pressed for results at the center all we really had to offer as evidence was Michael Harrington's *The Other America*, which had led to the War on Poverty (and which study was financed with other funds). We may also have generated a few headlines he[re].

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and there with the epic-sized convocations built around *Pacem in Terris*, Pope John XXIII's encyclical, and, by God, we even got the likes of Indira Gandhi to come.

Those, however, were flashy fund-raisers, pure and simple, hardly intellectual exercises. Could public figures—and even thinkers, for that matter—really deal in the coin of thought in such situations? No, the dynamic of the dialogue could only work at the table where men and women, all of them intelligent, and from every walk of life, could press and push one another so that the daily contact—conflict, if you will—resulted over months and years in the most extraordinary intellectual rapport. Indeed, that worst of all measurements of pragmatism, efficiency, could paradoxically be applied to the dialogue. With the infinity of day-to-day exchanges both a common vocabulary and a common set of concepts developed, and these in turn generated genuine intellectual adhesion among all participants; time was not wasted in talking past one another.

The normative approach was the method. There was no message, other than that each should grow and then by his or her own means go forth with the basic issues clarified to help others deal with the problems of our time—with clear minds and without the rhetorical and propagandistic crust that intrudes upon understanding.

In a society so dominated by media, bumper stickers have become the fodder of public discourse. The center was an attempt at resisting that trend. Hutchins used to say democracy was a terrible system until you tried to figure out something better. The Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions was not exactly a roaring success. But has anyone seen anything better? If we are to move along progressively, somewhere someone should be attempting what the center tried.

Stanley K. Sheinbaum, the publisher of New Perspectives Quarterly ***and a regent of the University of California, was*** *an economics fellow at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions.*

HARRY S. ASHMORE

In this winter of discontent an increasing number of Americans seem to be reluctantly facing up to the proposition Robert Maynard Hutchins addressed throughout his career: "No existing theory of politics, economics or society or international relations can explain or account for the facts of contemporary life. Our situation has changed too fast for our ideas, and our ideas have degenerated into slogans."

Hutchins held that this condition must be a primary concern of the university if it was to fulfill its traditional role as a center of independent thought and criticism. When his own experience convinced him that the calcified educational bureaucracy could no longer accommodate the untrammeled, interdisciplinary dialogue the situation required, he created the small, freestanding Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions.

The declared purpose of the center was to identify and define the basic issues raised by an era of accelerating technological and demographic change, and widen the circles of

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discussion about them. The search was not for solutions but for clarification. "We are not here to tell people what to think," Hutchins said. "If we succeed we may tell them what they should be thinking about."

The means to that end was to be a continuing dialogue among the best minds he could recruit here and abroad. These would likely be scholars of established reputation, although they did not have to be, and Hutchins thought a dozen permanent residential fellows and a small support staff would be enough to focus the ideas of visiting participants and outside contributors.

Measured by the terms in which he conceived it, the center was clearly a failure—or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that it never existed at all. Some who could properly be identified as the best minds of the time were among the hundreds of intellectuals and public figures who sat at the conference table in the old mansion in Santa Barbara, contributed to center publications or participated in the great public convocations staged in major cities here and abroad. But the center never had an endowment to provide the compensation and tenure such as these would require if they were to become the permanent, full-time participants Hutchins visualized.

Measured by the standards circumstances forced upon it, the center could, I think, have justified its existence. One who goes back over the publications and audio and videotapes produced by the dialogue in the days when Hutchins presided over it will note the early emergence of seminal ideas that have since gained currency in intellectual circles, and to a lesser extent among the general public. Some of the public figures the center brought within its orbit surely were influenced by an experience most of them found unique. And, once the ground was broken, there followed a proliferation of institutes in which the idea of dialogue is kept alive, even though it has nowhere been exalted to the heights Hutchins envisioned and often is more honored in the breach.

As it turned out, the center could not survive as an institution without its founder, and there were always those who saw the undertaking as a contradiction in terms in an era of cultural fragmentation. But if it was not yet at hand, Hutchins never doubted that his concept of dialogue as the alternative to doctrine was an idea whose time would come. He had a standard reply for the skeptics: "I would remind you of the words variously attributed to William the Silent and Charles the Bold. I have quoted them over and over: 'It is not necessary to hope in order to undertake, nor to succeed in order to persevere.'"

Harry S. Ashmore, a Pulitzer Prize–winning journalist, was a member of the board of the Fund for the Republic and served as executive vice president of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. He is writing a biography of Robert Hutchins to be published by Little, Brown.

MICHAEL HARRINGTON

It was the summer of 1960, my first visit to the center, and it occurred to me that a fool could satirize the place.

It was a conference on the labor movement, with Raph Helstein of the Packinghouse Workers, Willard Wirtz, soon to be John Kennedy's Secretary of Labor, Leon Keyserling, the eminent New Dealer, and other insiders. On the first day, our morning session was interrupted as red-coated waiters set up a bar and we repaired to a beautiful patio overlooking the ocean to discuss the problems of the workers.

That dimension existed, no doubt about it, and it would be all that the fool would see. The deeper paradox was that serious thought took place in this radical chic setting.

Continuity was a key reason. I remember a monthlong conference on economics organized by Stanley Sheinbaum in 1964. The participants ranged from Anthony Crosland, the theorist of the right wing of the British Labor Party, to renowned monetarist economists, and, if memory serves, Milton Friedman himself put in an appearance. We were able to explore ideas at length, over dinner as well as around the conference table. There was time to go beyond jousting and point-making.

My relation with Crosland could serve as a paradigm of what I mean. I had disagreed with him before we met—and after we became friends. But our differences and our substantial agreements were now richer, more informed and productive.

The point is, a genuine dialogue takes time and requires that people learn what their opponents really mean in a whole series of exchanges. It was not an accident, then, that the presiding genius of the center, Robert Hutchins, was as brilliant a listener as he was a speaker. I had encountered him from afar at the intellectual Camelot he created at the University of Chicago. At Santa Barbara, he did not simply advocate the spirit of dialogue. He incarnated it.

Sometimes there would be an incredibly boring presentation and I would drift off, but not before observing that Hutchins was listening intently. At the end, his summary would miraculously find something of value in the disastrous intervention. The point is, it is not enough to have great talkers. There has to be time for the great listening that must be part of any serious interchange.

And, what that satirist scandalizing over our discussions of working-class alienation on the beautiful patio would never have imagined, Hutchins, a radical aristocrat, actually believed that the people, and not just the intellectual elite, were capable of dialogue. I have seen precisely that happen at the United Automobile Workers Family Education Center at Black Lake, in Michigan, where rank-and-file auto workers, given half a chance, have demonstrated the ability to talk and to listen with considerable brilliance.

The point is not to bring back Camelot for the few. In this postmodern age of electronic stimuli, I suspect the survival of civilization requires Camelots at the grass roots. Hutchins, who was crazy enough to turn the "great books" into a mass movement, believed that. So do I.

Michael Harrington, a co-chair of Democratic Socialists of America, was associated with the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions from 1959 to 1970. His latest book is The Next Left: The History of the Future *(Henry Holt & Co.*

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INSIDE THE PROPAGANDA BLITZ

Showtime for Major Miranda

ROBERT PARRY

William Casey, Director of Central Intelligence, would smile his lopsided grin whenever the Sandinistas reacted to some real or imagined U.S. provocation by cracking down on internal dissent. It was a Central Intelligence Agency goal to make the Nicaraguan government "more repressive," several intelligence sources quote Casey as saying. Casey's purpose was clear: to exploit Sandinista misdeeds to build public and Congressional support for the *contras*.

Casey's strategy called for what Administration insiders term "perception management"—the controlling of the public's understanding of the conflict in Central America. The overall aim has been to tear down any favorable image of the Sandinistas while making Americans feel threatened by Nicaragua, an impoverished, underdeveloped nation of 3 million people that has been attacked repeatedly by U.S. troops over the past century.

This strategy continues. The Pentagon still releases maps showing concentric circles encompassing American cities that could be reached by Soviet bombers launched from Managua. (Why the Russians would not attack with missiles or from closer airfields in Cuba is not explained.) The State Department continues to issue reports blaming the Sandinistas for all that is wrong in the region. A recent chronology on Central American negotiations slams "Sandinista intransigence" for failed talks and cites numerous trips by Ambassador Philip Habib on behalf of those negotiations. The chronology does not note, however, that Habib abruptly resigned last summer or that he reportedly left because Administration hard-liners were thwarting the peace initiative.

A little-discussed revelation from the Iran/*contra* scandal was the existence of a highly coordinated propaganda operation inside the U.S. government, directed by the National Security Council staff. Documents unearthed by the Congressional investigation show that the propaganda apparatus, set up with Casey's strong support, was designed to whip up support for the *contras* while intimidating politicians and reporters who raised questions about the operation.

The propaganda apparatus hid the layer of lies told in the name of the *contra* cause, from the early deception that *contra* aid was intended to interdict weapons going to El Salvador to claims that the *contras* had mined Nicaraguan harbors in 1984 (it was really the C.I.A.) to the denials of any U.S. government connection to the *contra* supply plane carrying Eugene Hasenfus, shot down in October 1986.

One might have thought this history would have made the U.S. media more skeptical when the State Department unveiled a high-level Sandinista defector on the eve of a *contra* aid vote in Congress in December. After all, many of the key players remain in place. One of the chief deceivers, Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams, is still in charge of the *contra* policy. Alan Fiers, the C.I.A. official who candidly said he didn't want to be the first to tell Congress the truth about illicit Administration involvement in the *contra* effort, is still managing the war. The leaders of the *contras* are as tightly controlled by the C.I.A. as they ever were. When Miguel Cardinal Obando y Bravo of Nicaragua flew to Miami with a Sandinista cease-fire plan, *contra* chief Adolfo Calero felt obliged to ask the agency for permission to be photographed with him. Permission was denied.

Yet remarkably, when Abrams's "public diplomacy" team unveiled Sandinista defector Maj. Roger Miranda Bengoechea the Administration's line was accepted with little skepticism. With breathless headlines, as Abrams's assistants carefully stage-managed Miranda's unveiling, the press focused on the Sandinistas' plans to build a 500,000-to-600,000-man military force by the middle of the next decade. That, publication after publication noted, would mean enlisting nearly all able-bodied men in the nation. Further, Miranda insisted that the Soviet Union had agreed to ship MIG-21 jets to Nicaragua early in the 1990s. And he said the Sandinistas had contingency plans to bomb Costa Rica and attack Honduras if the United States invaded. The disclosures prompted front-page stories in newspapers across the country in an outpouring of editorial outrage that surprised even some of Miranda's handlers. They acknowledged privately that he offered little that was new. Caught up in the excitement, Congress quickly passed $8.1 million in new *contra* aid. (The *contras* also received $6.3 million in equipment and services from the Department of Defense.) The wreckage of the Central American peace plan that is expected to follow—unless the recent concessions of President Daniel Ortega forestall it—will set the stage for a major escalation of *contra* aid as we go into the U.S. presidential election.

The press, while churning out dozens of stories, provided little coherent analysis of Miranda's statements. Some had been corroborated by Nicaraguan Defense Minister Humberto Ortega and by the documents Miranda brought with him. Other assertions rested entirely on his word.

One key fact that seemed lost in the journalistic pack was that almost 90 percent of the 600,000-man "army" would be lightly armed civilian militia and reservists. Also overlooked were Miranda's figures showing that under the proposed "buildup" the Sandinistas' active-duty armed forces might actually shrink slightly, going from 80,000 now, according to the latest Pentagon estimates, to between 70,000 and 80,000 by the mid-1990s.

The defensive purpose of the military force was downplayed in the media, though the documents and Miranda himself acknowledged it. Miranda said Nicaragua had no "concrete plans" for attacking any Central American country, except in the event of a U.S. invasion, when, he claimed,

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Robert Parry is a national security correspondent for Newsweek.

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the Sandinistas intended to bomb Costa Rica and march into Honduras. Miranda, though, presented nothing in writing about those contingencies, and few analysts took threats of Sandinista counterinvasions seriously. Any U.S. invasion force would immediately destroy whatever air force the Sandinistas had, and the attack routes in Honduras and Costa Rica would be clogged with the U.S. Army.

A key passage in the chief Sandinista planning document released by the State Department gives one simple reason for strengthening the Nicaraguan military: to "more convincingly avert the possibility of a direct invasion by American troops." In other words, despite all the alarms about secret Sandinista aggressive designs, internal documents—presumably containing the government's candid thoughts—depict the Sandinistas' real goal as preventing a U.S. invasion. Oddly, that puts the Sandinista military plans in line with stated U.S. policy. From Ronald Reagan to Christopher Dodd, policy-makers in Washington also seek to avoid direct U.S. military intervention.

Yet in briefing the press, Administration officials argued that the buildup made sense only if the Sandinistas wanted to subdue their neighbors. One senior Pentagon official contended that the Sandinistas had to be planning an invasion of Costa Rica because a Nicaraguan defense force, no matter how large, could be easily crushed by a U.S. invasion force. In other words, Nicaragua was caught up in some deadly circular logic: Any effort by the Sandinistas to defend against a U.S. attack is futile; any Nicaraguan buildup must be offensive, thereby justifying U.S. intervention.

Other Sandinista plans and actions described by Miranda were presented without context. Nicaragua's continued desire to obtain twelve MIG-21 jet fighters from the Russians was cited as further proof of Sandinista aggressiveness, without noting that the United States is bolstering Honduras's superior air force with fourteen F-5E jet fighters. Much press attention was given to the Sandinistas' training of Salvadoran guerrillas to use shoulder-fired antiaircraft missiles. But none of the stories mentioned that the C.I.A. already has trained the *contras* to use Redeye missiles and has supplied the sophisticated antiaircraft weapon in large numbers, with devastating effect against the Sandinistas.

Whether right or wrong, the Sandinistas are clearly adopting a tit-for-tat strategy. They note that the World Court has judged the U.S.-supported *contra* war illegal and has demanded an end to U.S. interference in Nicaraguan affairs. Since President Reagan rejected the court's jurisdiction, the Sandinistas argue that they have the right to do whatever they feel is necessary to defend their country.

Asked what was wrong with the Sandinistas' "symmetry" argument, one Administration official boiled it down to a case of "us against them." "You have to understand," he explained, "they're the enemy." As for the Sandinistas' assertion that they have a right to self-defense, the U.S. official conceded that they "may be right under international law, but it's really a matter of who has the power."

Miranda's credibility is also open to question, particularly since he failed a lie-detector test and many of his allegations lack corroboration. For instance, his purloined documents don't support his claim that the Russians have already approved the shipment of high-quality weapons, including MIGs, to Nicaragua by the mid-1990s. Miranda says that a senior Soviet military official participated in drawing up those plans and that the signing of an official protocol in Moscow in early 1988 would be just a formality.

A document released by the Administration to buttress Miranda's account tells a different story. In it, the Sandinistas say they want to meet with the Russians and Cubans for their "consideration" of Nicaraguan near-term military needs for the 1988-90 period. (Pentagon officials note that under Nicaragua's current five-year military plan, the Russians promised nine weapons systems but so far have delivered five.)

The document also says the Sandinistas are asking Soviet help in drafting "*preliminary* guidelines for improving the Sandinista armed forces from 1991 to 1995." [Emphasis added.] It is in the Sandinista proposal for that drafting session that the MIGs are mentioned. In short, the documents say that the delivery of the MIGs is still under consideration—as it has been for years. The Russians have pulled the rug from under that request before. "There will be skepticism about the MIGs until they land at Sandino Airport," acknowledged one Defense Department official.

What about Soviet intentions? In a cryptic comment during the Washington summit in December, General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev implied that the Russians would stop military shipments to the Sandinistas in exchange for similar restraint by the United States in aiding its allies in the region. Despite that opening, the Administration failed to raise Miranda's revelations either with Gorbachev or Soviet officials in discussions of regional conflicts. When a *New York Times* reporter asked one U.S. official why President

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Reagan had not confronted them with the information, the official responded: "You don't understand. Miranda was for the press and Congress, not for Gorbachev."

Regardless of the accuracy of his assertions, Miranda has undeniably reshaped the *contra* aid debate. The renewed "nonlethal aid," which will permit C.I.A. arms drops to the *contras* through the end of February, damages the already troubled Central American peace plan. The C.I.A.'s continued supply flights from Honduran territory violate the peace accord's ban on cross-border supplying of insurgent forces and give the Sandinistas a ready-made excuse to avoid compliance, which in turn will encourage more *contra* aid.

The collapse of the Central American peace plan is just what Administration hard-liners have hoped for all along. Like Reagan, they see the plan as fatally flawed, permitting the Sandinistas to consolidate power while insuring a *contra* defeat. The plan of Costa Rican President Oscar Arias would permit all Central American incumbents to finish out their terms, meaning Daniel Ortega could keep his office until 1990. One White House source said that, several months ago, Reagan told his senior advisers flatly that he wants the Sandinistas out of power before he leaves office on January 20, 1989.

Reagan's dream may be hard to realize. U.S. intelligence analysts see little chance of a *contra* victory in the next year, even with increased C.I.A. aid. Thus, some Administration moderates, such as Habib, have argued that the peace process, while not perfect, offers the best hope for bringing stability to the region and reducing Soviet influence.

Although thoroughly routed when the hard-liners exploited Miranda's revelations, the moderates still maintain that the death of the Arias plan would confront the United States with an even tougher dilemma. If the *contras* demonstrably cannot win and the Sandinistas again crack down on the internal opposition, what then? These officials see only distasteful alternatives for the Administration: either to accept a more repressive Sandinista regime or do what all sides say they want to avoid—send in the marines. □

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THE NEW REAGANOMICS

The Party's Over, But Who Pays?

JEFF FAUX

Reaganomics, as such, is finished. The mainstream of American politics has decided that the profligate and reactionary economic policies of the past seven years must be dramatically changed in order to avoid collapse. Scarcely a day goes by without an investment banker complaining to *The New York Times* that the politicians have not cut the deficit enough or a stock broker solemnly advising Robert MacNeil or Jim Lehrer that the "party is over."

The new line, reinforced by the conventional wisdom of the economics profession, is that America's problems originate not in the excesses of the market but in the hedonism of the American public. We are now told that we have been spending beyond our means, that we don't save enough of our income and that we have been consuming more than we have been producing, importing the difference. Therefore, we all have to cut back on spending.

There is some truth to those generalizations. By definition, fiscal deficits represent an excess of spending over revenue, and trade deficits an excess of consumption over production. It is also true that if Americans saved more we would not have had to borrow money from overseas to finance our deficits. But these simple statistical truisms do not logically lead to the answer to the critical questions: Now that the party is over, who will pay the bill? Whose consumption will be cut?

If Wall Street had an index for political chutzpah, it would be at an all-time high. After having milked the Reaganomics scam for all it was worth, America's financial elite want to send the bill to those who have had their noses pressed against the window: middle- and low-income families whose real incomes have stagnated. The rationale has been laid out in a bipartisan budget plan written by former Commerce Secretary Pete Peterson and endorsed by 250 investment bankers, corporate heads and assorted academic sympathizers in two-page ads that appeared last November in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and other newspapers.

This bipartisan budget plan calls for cuts in entitlements and other domestic spending but only "restraints" on military spending. Increasing taxes should be a last resort and then only "in ways that discourage consumption and encourage savings and investment," a euphemism for shifting the tax burden from upper-income to lower-income groups. The poor are promised that they will be spared, of course, just as

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they were promised when Reaganomics was launched seven years ago. In fact, the plan's language is strikingly similar to that of Ronald Reagan's first economic report, in 1982. It can justifiably be called a blueprint for Reaganomics II.

The idea that the road to economic health must be built on the reduction of the real income of an overconsuming public has already been bought by a large chunk of the press and political world. It clearly influenced the compromise reached by the Congressional leadership and the White House on the fiscal 1988 budget. Military spending was cut by $5 billion while entitlements and other nonmilitary spending were cut by $6.6 billion. House Speaker Jim Wright's earlier suggestion that scheduled income-tax rate reductions be postponed for upper-income people got virtually no support among House Democrats, who seemed somewhat embarrassed by their leader's populism.

Indeed, there is a widely held belief that austerity is the right medicine for the American economic illness and that the real problem is a chicken-hearted Congress pandering to a greedy electorate. When the bipartisan plan was echoed in a public statement organized by the Institute for International Economics (whose chair is Pete Peterson) and signed by thirty-three economists, editorial writers all over America used it to lay the nation's economic problems at the feet of spineless politicians refusing to follow the lead of their business and academic betters. But the Peterson plan is wrongheaded on at least three counts:

§ It forces the burden of paying for Reaganomics' deficits on those who got the least benefit from them.

§ It increases the danger of recession.

§ It makes the process of cutting the budget deficit a pretext for destroying the capacity of government to invest in human beings and physical infrastructure and to resolve social problems—just as Reaganomics I did.

The central causes of the Reagan fiscal deficits were the budgetary decisions made in the first year of this Administration: As is now well known, military spending ballooned beyond any reasonable level and revenues were reduced by lowering effective tax rates, primarily for upper-income people and corporations. Between fiscal years 1980 and 1988 military spending grew, as a proportion of all Federal outlays, from 22 percent to 26 percent. Entitlements fell slightly in share. Other nondefense spending dropped from 25 percent to 16 percent of spending. Interest payments rose from 9 percent to 13 percent of all outlays, as a result of high interest rates and the accumulated debt generated by the Reagan deficits.

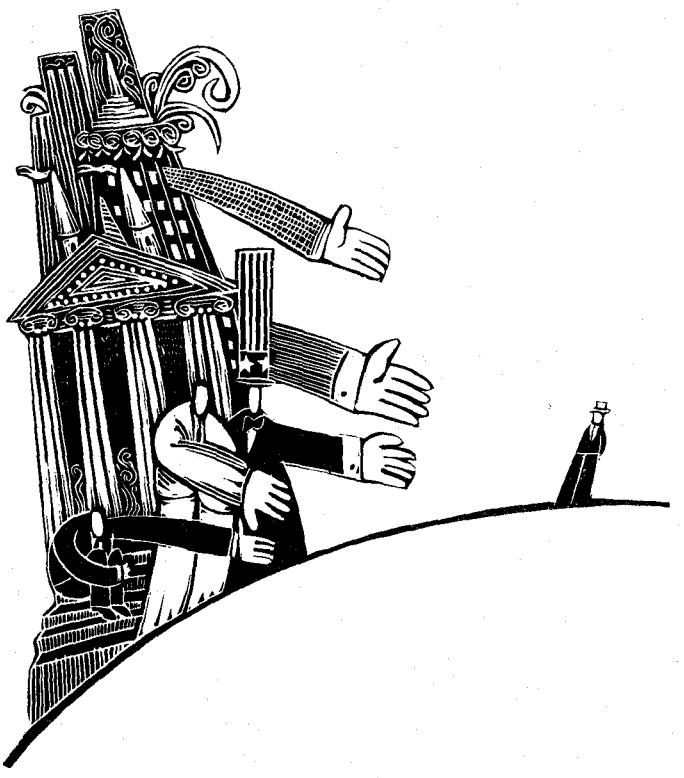
The facts of the shift in the tax burden are equally clear. In 1986 the Federal government collected less tax from corporations than it had in 1980, and as a share of total revenues the corporate income tax dropped from 13 percent to 8 percent. Payroll taxes, on the other hand, rose from 31 percent to 37 percent. And despite the Tax Reform Act of 1986 (which undid some of the earlier damage to the tax code), 1988 will still see the rich paying lower rates than they did a decade ago, while the poor will pay more.

The shift in taxing and spending priorities has clearly favored upper-income people. Between 1977 and 1988 some $129 billion in income will have been shifted from the lower 90 percent of families to the top 10 percent.

That shift reflects a dramatic differential in the growth of incomes that derive from labor, primarily wages and salaries, as opposed to those that are generated by property ownership. Between 1979 and 1986 income derived from owning assets (securities, real property, etc.) rose by 26 percent if measured as a share of total personal income, while income from labor dropped by 3.4 percent. Thus, while the nation as a whole may have been consuming more than it has been producing, those who have been working to produce goods and services have been receiving a smaller share of the income.

The elderly have been specifically targeted by the Peterson group and other advocates of austerity. In justifying cuts in Social Security entitlements, much is made of the fact that the poverty rate for persons over 65 is now 12.4 percent as opposed to 13.6 percent for the population as a whole. Therefore, the elderly as a group can supposedly "afford" to take lower incomes.

But in fact, it was Social Security that enabled many of the elderly to escape poverty in the first place. If we look at the population living just above the poverty line, we find that 20.5 percent of the elderly are living on incomes less than 25 percent above it, compared with 18.2 percent of all Americans [see John L. Hess, "Social Security Is for Everybody," *The Nation*, January 16]. Reducing Social Security cost-of-living adjustments across the board will obviously hurt the low-income recipients the most. Thus, despite its promise to maintain programs for the poor, the bipartisan budget plan's argument that "middle-class" entitlements need to be cut is quickly translated into significant real income reductions for the low-income elderly.



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Implicit in the bipartisan budget plan is the same assumption that fueled Reaganomics I: Shifting funds from lower-income to upper-income people would increase the supply of savings, which in turn would produce a supply-side investment boom and accelerate economic growth. But the promised boom in savings and investment never materialized. Instead, the personal savings rate has dropped dramatically. And despite corporate cash flows swollen by tax benefits, real fixed investment by business has risen an anemic 2.6 percent a year during Ronald Reagan's tenure, as opposed to 7.1 percent under Jimmy Carter.

Thus, there is no credible evidence that shifting taxes from business and high-income families to moderate- and low-income workers has had any effect on investment. What investment we have had has come in the traditional way, i.e., business response to increases in consumer spending.

The self-interest and hypocrisy of the bipartisan plan is blatant. For example, *The Wall Street Journal* reported that while signers of the Peterson group's ad were calling for fairly shared sacrifices, a number of them were actively lobbying for more tax breaks on Capitol Hill. "Listening to these representatives of corporate America talk about deficit reduction is like listening to the Reverend Jim Bakker preach the glory of chastity," said California Representative Fortney Stark. When pressed about this contradiction by *The Journal*, one of Peterson's defenses was that the ad called for cutting Social Security benefits for the wealthy, and nearly all its signers are personally well off. The notion that taxing Lee Iacocca's Social Security benefits represents a sacrifice is absurd. But similar absurdities helped sell Reagan's original program. It is not too farfetched to imagine the U.S. Congress buying the moral assumptions of Reaganomics II in order to escape the economic consequences of Reaganomics I.

One risk of *any* further deficit reduction at this point is that the cuts will be translated into reductions in consumer income and spending before a countervailing stimulus, from lower interest rates, can take hold. As Harvard University economist Francis Bator points out, "Bringing about such a switch is a delicate task, best done gradually and when the economy is expanding rapidly. Fiscal compression works predictably and fast; monetary ease, acting in part through the exchange rate, works only slowly—the lags are variable and long." Given the huge amount of debt hanging over the world's consumers, banks, businesses and governments, even a shallow recession could quickly turn into a spiraling economic collapse.

Those who advocate sudden, drastic reductions in Federal spending are asking us to risk a recession brought on by a contraction in the buying power of most Americans, effected in order to restore "confidence" to high-income investors in the stock and bond markets and to insure them against the pain of inflation. It is too high a price to pay. The essential purpose of economic policy should not be to re-excite the nation's financial casinos but to insure that the deflation there does not spread to the "real" economy—the circulation of income between buyers and sellers of goods and services. The agreed-upon $33 billion in budget cuts for fiscal 1988 is as much as the real economy can handle.

For the fiscal 1989 budget, measures to reduce the deficit ought to be concentrated on those sectors of the economy that have benefited most. A reasonable package could create savings by adopting Jim Wright's proposal to return the income-tax rate for upper-income groups to 1987 levels, by cutting military spending and taxing economically counterproductive financial speculation (e.g., a transfer tax on purchases of securities or a tax on short-term capital gains from buying and selling them). Moreover, we should avoid making *any* irrevocable decisions. In the event of an economic downturn, the budget-reduction cure can often be worse than the disease—as we learned in the 1930s.

In addition, repairing the long-term structural damage done to the American economy by policies that have made us the largest debtor nation in the world will require: (1) the development of new international arrangements to induce other industrial nations, particularly West Germany and Japan, to increase consumption in order to maintain global demand for goods and services; (2) restructuring the Third World debt so that underdeveloped nations can once again import capital goods from America to support long-term growth both here and there; (3) a multiyear strategy for increasing the competitiveness of U.S. industry through sensible trade and industrial policies designed to increase domestic business investment; and (4) expanding public investment in human and physical resources.

As we begin the task of getting our economic house in order, however, we should be skeptical of cleanup suggestions from Wall Street that call for Americans elsewhere to make additional sacrifices in order to bolster its shaken confidence. Certainly the first people to whom Congress should hand the mop are those who spilled the punch. □

Thatcher

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

Africa and by a free-for-all between members of the Thatcher party and Babangida's security guards, during which the Prime Minister's press secretary, Bernard Ingham, had been jabbed in the stomach with a rifle butt.

It's hard, actually, to have much sympathy for Ingham, considering what Thatcher has in mind for the British press. The running battle over secrecy, dominated during 1987 by the *Spycatcher* saga, continues with endless new twists. Among the latest moves are injunctions against *The Sunday Times* of London and *The Observer* to prevent publication of extracts from *Inside Intelligence*, a book brought out by former M.I.6 operative Anthony Cavendish in the form of a Christmas card to friends to evade a publishing ban; the banning of a BBC Radio 4 documentary, which featured interviews with nine former M.I.5 agents; and the threat of a prison term for Jeremy Warner of *The Independent*, who refused to disclose his sources for articles about insider trading in the City.

Thatcher's goal is to prevent any civil servant from ever divulging anything learned as a result of government service.

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The immediate target, however, is not the leaker but the news media. And the weapon is the courts, which are becoming the instrument of an increasingly dogmatic and unfettered executive, with Parliament no longer a forum for the serious discussion of controversy but a kind of lame bystander. The government pulled out all the stops last week to defeat a bill to reform the notorious Section 2 of the 1911 Official Secrets Act, the rationale being that national security is too important a matter to be left to M.P.s.

The public's response to all this is a massive indifference. To many commentators, like Alan Watkins, writing in the January 10 *Observer*, people are simply bored with Thatcher's attempts to muzzle the press. True, the *Spycatcher* affair has become repetitive and farcical, an eccentric but unthreatening feature of the British landscape, rather like Agatha Christie's play *The Mousetrap*, which has been running in the West End longer than anyone can remember. At the same time, much of the public's antipathy to the press is well merited, given the reptilian quality of so many of the tabloids, which feed their readers a daily diet of bare breasts, bingo games and royal trivia that would shame a supermarket checkout counter in the United States.

But there's more to it than that. Information is simply not a highly prized commodity in this country; it disturbs, it threatens the order of things. No better illustration than Windscale. Cabinet papers released at New Year under the thirty-year secrecy rule show that the Tory government of Harold MacMillan suppressed an official report on the 1957 fire at the Windscale nuclear reactor in the north of England. The accident was much worse than Three Mile Island: Even the official National Radiological Protection Board admits that thirty-three people died as a result (anti-nuclear groups figure several hundred). The most dreadful part of the story is MacMillan's reason for the cover-up: He feared publication of the truth might endanger the Central Intelligence Agency's confidence in Britain as a nuclear weapons partner. In the United States, I like to think, Windscale would have set the investigative reporters scurrying to pursue the story. In Britain it landed in the newspapers like a dead fish.

Whether the press qualifies as Thatcher's public enemy number one is debatable, given the range of other contenders—local government, the National Health Service, comprehensive education. None more, in this ugly and intolerant new year, than gays. If the daily press has suffered at Thatcher's hands, consider the fate of the London weekly *Capital Gay*, whose offices were firebombed in December. Worse, consider the reaction: When the news reached the House of Commons, it was greeted by the cry of "Quite right!" from Tory M.P. Elaine Kellett-Bowman, who declared, "There should be intolerance of evil."

When British politicians pronounce the word "minority," they tend to look as if they have just bitten on a lemon. To hear most conservatives talk, minority rights are a step away from social anarchy; for Labor, they are an electoral liability—something that will scare away the pensioners' vote. Britain's Afro-Caribbean and Asian population has long been familiar with those attitudes; gays and lesbians seem to be the latest target. Before Parliament this session is a new local government bill, with provisions that include outlawing the "promotion" of homosexuality in state schools.

The antigay backlash, with its attendant nostalgia for the fixed truths of the past, is also touching the Church of England, the third pillar, along with Parliament and the Crown, of the 1688 settlement. To widespread applause from the tabloids, the Bishop of Ripon announced recently that he would not allow active homosexuals to join his clergy and that he would "discipline" any who had already wormed their way in. If the C. of E. loses its moral fiber, Thatcher appears ready to move further afield in the hunt for correct religious values. In the New Year's Honors List, she bestowed a life peerage on Britain's Chief Rabbi, Immanuel Jakobovits, who told *The Independent* last November that he thought "adultery as well as homosexuality should be brought within the penal code."

Amid all this turmoil, the Labor Party is well-nigh invisible, engaged in a wide-ranging policy review. Neil Kinnock went for the moral middle ground in last June's elections, refusing to stick his neck out for minorities, be they blacks, gays or journalists. The result was the worst of both worlds: He lost big anyway, and democratic liberties were left with fewer defenders than ever. Back at school, it was always drilled into us that what made the British polity special was the absence of a constitution and a bill of rights; there was no need for formal guarantees, since politics had been conducted, since 1688, in a gentlemanly spirit of consensus that made us the envy of the world. Ah, I recall us saying even then, but what if, one day, an authoritarian leader should try to break the rules? What protection does the system offer then? In this bleak London January, those questions feel suddenly more urgent. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

The Democratic Historian

DAVID NASAW

POWER AND CULTURE: Essays on the American Working Class. *By Herbert G. Gutman. Edited by Ira Berlin. Pantheon. 452 pp. $29.95.*

What accounts for Herbert Gutman's prominent position in American historiography? His first book was published when he was nearly 50, he never held an endowed chair or a permanent appointment in an Ivy League school. He never won an academic prize or was elected an officer of a professional society or organization. His writing was, with few exceptions, painfully wooden. So why, more than two years after his death, is a new collection of his work, most of it already in print, being published?

The easiest answer is the least satisfying: Gutman had a lot of friends. His mismatched plaid suits, robust manners, passion for history, and political candor appealed to the generation that came of age in the 1960s. For those radical young professors who feared that entrance into the academy and—God forbid—tenure would turn them into Republicans, Gutman's presence was reassuring. History was not a dry objective science for Gutman. "He was," his colleague Ira Berlin recalls in his introduction to this volume, "a political person, and he believed that history was a political subject."

But Gutman's standing in the historical profession and left intellectual community was based on more than his ability to attract the loyalty of young scholars. Those who doubt it should read this collection.

The book is not easy going. The first four essays on labor history, particularly two that Gutman never published (and, reading them, one can understand why), are quite difficult to slog through. The second half of the book, with essays and excerpts on the black family and black culture, an interview with Gutman, an article on his final research project (written with Berlin) and an essay on "Historical Consciousness in Contemporary America," is not light reading either but thoroughly repays the time spent with it.

The collection should be read with Berlin's introduction as a guide. Berlin places each article in its proper context and convincingly ties together the two strands of Gutman's career: labor and black history.

In an interview published in *Radical History Review* in 1983, two years before his death, Gutman explained how he had prepared for his dissertation on working-class history in the Gilded Age. "Dissatisfied with what had been written, I devised a simple strategy. I divided the country into several regions and read one or two major newspapers from each [for the years] 1873-1878 to find out what Americans, and especially working people, were doing and thinking."

His "simple strategy" kept him in the stacks for three years reading the *Cincinnati Commercial*, the *Braidwood Journal*, the *New York Sun*, the *Joliet Signal* and the *Chicago Tribune*, among many others. When he emerged, still only a graduate student, he probably knew as much as anyone else about what "Americans, and especially working people," had been "doing and thinking" in the mid-1870s.

What he discovered supplied him with abundant evidence to rip apart the "consensus" an older generation of historians had been assembling and disseminating. American working people, the local papers made quite clear, were not quietly accepting their place in the new industrial world of the 1870s. Strikes, lockouts, protests and parades were not historical ephemera or the flotsam of the movement toward a capitalist paradise: They were concrete expressions of the class conflict that was endemic to nineteenth-century industrialization—in this country, as elsewhere.

Gutman was a prodigious researcher but one whose political sensibilities protected him from the trap such researchers often fall into: an ahistorical antiquarianism that views the past as another world, isolated and removed from the present. He entered the archives with particular questions drawn from his political concerns. As Berlin makes clear in his introduction, Gutman was introduced to working-class culture and politics by his parents, who were active members of the non-Communist "Jewish Old Left": "His sense of the oppositional nature of working-class life was nurtured by the oppositional culture in which he grew up." As a historian, he viewed working-class history from within rather than from the outside. He would later say, paraphrasing Jean-Paul Sartre, that he was interested not in what "has been done to [working] men and women but what [these] men and women do with what is done to them."

This emphasis on working-class agency, resistance and opposition may account for what appears to be a one-dimensionality, an almost numbing monotony in some of the early essays. We are overwhelmed with evidence of working-class activism: incident after incident, strike after strike, protest after protest, year after year. In the end, however, we learn the lessons Gutman wanted us to learn: that history is "made," not given; that post–Civil War American workers played a significant part in the making of their class and of the new industrial world; and that the "consensus" or "class convergence" mode of historical writing that assumes an underlying convergence of values within and between social classes obscures much more than it reveals.

If Gutman's passion to prove that working people did not quiescently accept a subordinate place in nineteenth-century America motivated his choice of subject matter and the questions he asked of it, he was too good a historian to play tricks with his evidence. In this collection, which includes essays written over a twenty-year period, one watches as Gutman's interpretations are modified as evidence accumulates to support or contradict them. His earliest work argued that strikes were more likely to succeed in small towns than in large cities because "face-to-face relationships [there] created more cross-class solidarities than the seeming anonymity of large cities." That argument, Gutman admitted in his 1983 interview, would have been valid had Pittsburgh and Chicago not existed. But they did exist; so the argument, pursued so vehemently in his early work, was dropped.

The labor history articles are the weakest in the collection, perhaps be-

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cause the two long, unpublished ones were never revised to meet Gutman's own standards. Or perhaps because his perspective on working-class history has been so thoroughly and relentlessly incorporated into the work of the present generation of social, immigrant and labor historians that what we read here, written twenty years ago, sounds labored and conventional.

Gutman was considered a maverick in the profession for doing his research in what colleagues and the academy—but never Gutman himself—considered to be two distinct subject areas: labor and black history. His "move" into black history was motivated by scholarly and political concerns. Gutman had an almost visceral dislike of historical work based on ahistorical assumptions. Like the history of the working class, but even more so, the history of slavery written during the first half of the twentieth century was, he believed, founded on such assumptions. "One of the central assumptions—perhaps the most central—about slavery by historians before 1960 was that, unlike other exploited groups, the slaves could do very little for themselves. That assumption, ultimately, rested on a common view of the slave family. What made slaves different from other exploited groups was not simply that they were owned . . . but that they were incapable, because of the fragmented nature of the family experience, of transmitting a changing culture over time."

It was important for Gutman that this view be contested, not simply because it was wrong but because it was becoming the basis for regressive social policy. The 1965 Moynihan report, as Berlin reminds us in his introduction, had declared that the "deterioration of the Negro family" was the "fundamental source of the weakness of the Negro community at the present time." Gutman knew this to be wrong. But he had as yet no evidence that the diseased and decimated slave family that Moynihan had blamed for the post–World War II "tangle of pathology" had never existed. In a series of powerful essays and excerpts in the second half of this collection, Gutman turns upside down what had been the traditional interpretation of the slave family and slave culture. The black family, he argued, was disrupted but never destroyed in slavery. Most slave children were raised by their parents; most parents remained married to one another; naming patterns demonstrated family continuity from generation to generation. Blacks, like other dominated groups, sustained and transmitted a culture through their families and enlarged kin groups, which provided them with the resources to engage and at times resist exploitation. As Berlin says, "Culture was as much a weapon for the Afro-American field hand as it was for the Irish seamstress, Slavic coal miner, or Bohemian cooper."

Gutman's research in black family history had demonstrated that "the same kind of historical questions [could] be asked of slaves that historians ask about any other exploited population." His labors in archives and libraries, with nineteenth-century newspapers and later with plantation property inventories, marriage registers and census schedules, provided him with the basis for constructing a new history of the American working class, black and white, one founded not on an unending chronicle of victimization but on culture as a source of power. This power was not absolute and was no match for the power of the industrialists or the slaveholders, backed up as they were by the state. But it persisted as a source of identity, solidarity, strength and resistance.

Wage and slave workers had not accepted their subordinate places in the social order because, lacking a culture of their own, they had been manipulated into accepting what was as what had to be. The ruling classes were able to rule, Gutman's evidence showed him, not because of cultural domination exacerbated by the "breakdown" of working-class cultures, but because of superior material power and resources.

"Hegemony" was not a major issue for Gutman. Neither the "power" of the factory owners nor that of the plantation owners was ever translated into "authority." Nineteenth-century strikers did not accept the rights of their employers to deprive them of their livelihoods; slaves did not accept the rights of their owners to hold them in bondage.

Gutman's focus on the cultures (not the parties or the politics) "of the poor and dispossessed" led critics to charge him with the sin of romanticism. But Gutman never claimed that the downtrodden were angels or that their "cultures" rescued them from the brutalities of industrialization or enslavement. His task was rather to demonstrate that classes are "made" over time, not frozen in it.

That lesson is important enough to be repeated, year after year, generation after generation. When we begin to

HYPOCRISY:
AMERICA'S LEADING EXPORT

Under the cover of "making the world safe for democracy", the U.S. has countless Military interventions and covert operations directed at destabilizing sovereign nations and popularly supported governments. Washington, D.C.'s rhetoric about democratic rights is twice over a fraud. Its global exploits have more to do with propping up multinational corporate interests than with the export of democracy. And the U.S. record on democracy at home is abysmal.

The U.S. is ranked near the bottom of some 75 world-wide electoral democracies in voter participation. A maze of legislation and regulations restricts voter registration and impedes access to the ballot for insurgents and independents. A steady erosion of the fairness doctrine has led to monopolization of the media by heavily funded major party candidates. And genuine public debate on critical social and foreign policy issues is stifled by the lack of democratic process.

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understand how our "past" was made, then perhaps we might also come to understand that our "future" is also "in the making." Historical thought can be liberating because, as Gutman argued, it can perform the magic trick of transforming necessity into contingency. In seeing how what "was" came to be, we also learn how it might have been different. We see that structures and styles of domination are not God-given or "natural" but historical; that today's virtues—like the individualism Gutman reminds us has been but one component of the American dream—might not have been yesterday's.

> Things that people had assumed were normal in their lives (like smog, or speed-up, or television, or clocks, or racism) are seen to have a beginning, a middle, and sometimes an end. When people come into contact with that perspective, they are better able to think analytically about the structures that impinge upon them.

In *In Search of New York City*, the recent special issue of *Dissent*, Marshall Berman concludes sadly that "the generosity of spirit, the reforming vision and energy of the 1960's seem to be gone with the wind." New York's intellectuals, he claims, have abdicated their historic role "as the consciousness and conscience of their cities." We, too, are victims of the Reagan/Koch years. A cold, calculated cynicism has become the dominant strain of discourse in the corridors of the academy that house the left intellectuals. We don't look outside our windows quite as often as we did a decade ago. We don't get as angry as we once did.

In the current climate, Gutman's rages and passions seem strangely out-of-date. His polemics against "the anti-democratic use of history" and history written from the top down; his willingness—at age 40—to shift the focus of his research to combat flawed historical work in black history and the regressive social policies it supported; his encouragement for young labor, black, women's, immigrant and social historians whose work was giving voice to the truly silent majority; his efforts to disseminate working-class history to union members and college students; his faith that there is a value in studying history, that it is in fact liberating to do so: these qualities set Herbert Gutman apart. It is for his work as a historian and for his qualities of mind and character that we remember and miss him. □

Bound Together

ANDREA FREUD LOEWENSTEIN

HER MOTHER'S DAUGHTER. *By Marilyn French. Summit Books. 686 pp. $21.95.*

Could it be, I wondered, as I set aside Marilyn French's new novel with a sigh of relief, that I've read too many of these mother-daughter books lately? Because the happy news is that after years of being an unrespectable topic, mothers and daughters are suddenly in. You could teach a course on the subject and have a hard time choosing the books; you could hold special sessions of the M.L.A.; you could write several doctoral theses.

Sons, of course, have always written about their mothers, even if only to count, like Philip Roth or D.H. Lawrence before him, the ways she done him wrong. Mild and faithful affection, which was what daughters were supposed to feel, was not a suitable emotion on which to found a book. Passion is what a book needs, whether it is passionate love or hatred or grief. And women, when they were allowed to write about their feelings at all, were supposed to feel passionate about men (first) and children (second). Fathers came a poor third, and mothers were not even in the game.

But the new rash of novels and autobiographical accounts confirm what has been evident to women all along: For many of us, our mothers are one of the ruling passions of our lives. Why, then, did I feel so fed up with *Her Mother's Daughter*, which is brimming with mothers and daughters and with what, at first glance, looks like passion?

Anastasia, the third of the three generations of mothers in the book, recalls: "My mother cried. It must be my first memory." As the pain begins "to creep around from her heart into her limbs," her mother, Belle, wonders "how anyone could cry so much, how it was physically possible to have that many tears inside you." Anastasia pictures the dinner table of her childhood and thinks, "All I want to do is cry. Cry for them all, Cry, cry, cry: I could die crying and still not cry enough to let out all my grief, their grief." After 686 similarly sodden pages, I found myself feeling quite sympathetic to the sometimes kind, sometimes dastardly but always wooden men who populate the book along with the weeping women.

Perhaps I am merely defending myself against the force of all that pain? French would probably think so. Prepared for such reactions, she takes time out for the occasional word to unfeeling (presumably male) readers like me: "Go ahead, blame her. . . . Yes, blame her if you dare, you son of a prick!" And, when Ed and Belle, Anastasia's parents, stay (miserably, of course) together: "But, lover of happy endings, they stayed together. . . . Isn't that what you want to hear?" In fact, I didn't care what happened to Ed and Belle, or to anyone else in the book. Anastasia tells us, "I stopped [trying to rescue my mother] from sheer hopelessness. I came to understand that it was useless to urge her to do anything because she was suffering from sickness of the heart, an incurable disease." And, "I try not to feel. I try to think. . . . But I am overwhelmed with feeling—with hopelessness. It doesn't matter what you do or how you try: the same things happen, over and over and over and over. There is no escape."

This depression, with its accompanying exhaustion and hopelessness, passed down from mother to daughter, is the theme of French's novel. It also unfortunately permeates the language and tone of the entire book. Grief or obsession can lend a writer precision of tone and a knife-edged awareness; the loved (or mourned or hated) object is scrutinized closely, often with a great deal of projection but almost always with tremendous energy. Depression is, on the other hand, merely deadening and narcissistic. My encounter with *Her Mother's Daughter* reminded me of an endless visit with a friend who talks about herself for hours, with no sparkle to her language or love for her subject. She gets through many handkerchiefs, but I can weep no sympathetic tears. My strongest feeling, easier to admit in the case of a book, is boredom and irritation, followed by guilt.

In depression, it is hard to notice the other. And the women in *Her Mother's Daughter* are difficult to distinguish.

Andrea Freud Loewenstein is the author of This Place *(Pandora/Routledge and Kegan Paul). She is completing a new novel about an American mother and daughter in London.*

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Belle is the most memorable, if only in her unpleasantness: Always cold, critical and dissatisfied, she seems enough to drive any daughter mad. Yet Anastasia's feelings for her mother are not so much ambivalent as blurred. Through Anastasia, we are instructed not to blame or dislike Belle, because she is nothing but a victim—of her own harsh past and of the endless cycle of women's oppression.

Belle's mother, Frances, is even more vaguely drawn. She is loving, passive and almost always miserable. French (through Anastasia) goes so far as to compare her to the Jews from her Polish village who were "shot, thrown in a pit, and covered with lime":

> Was it very different for her that she was saved? Living in a fine house in a neighborhood without sidewalks, with a country club, unable to drive, miles from the nearest public transportation, living on her son-in-law's charity?

French's need to resort to this unfortunate shortcut says something about the inability of the writing here to show, not tell us about, the quality of Frances's life. In fact, this very long book seems full of shortcuts: the cliché, the sudden, inexplicable change of tense and/or point of view, the repetition of catch phrases—used to avoid real feeling and the real writing that goes with it. The listing of menus or household tasks may be a device meant to remind us of the droning repetitiveness of women's lives, but here, it only succeeds in boring the reader.

Anastasia, the third mother and daughter in the book, is easily recognizable as the precocious child in ***The Women's Room***. Gifted and outwardly independent, anxious not to repeat her mother's and grandmother's misery, but nevertheless always miserable, she passes through the stages of marriage, young motherhood, disillusionment, divorce, remarriage and feminism—complete with a woman lover. She becomes Stacy Stevens, photographer for ***World*** magazine, leaving her children and new young househusband to travel on assignment, picking up love affairs and wild adventures as she goes.

The section on Anastasia's travels, presented retrospectively through old journal entries about the excitement of sex and airplane food, is as embarrassing as if the depressed friend, after four hours of moaning, had suddenly got up with a bright smile plastered on her face and begun to tell adventure stories. One particularly false tale, involving Stacy's coverage of a failed and amateurish effort to invade Cuba led by someone named Woody Hedgecock, may be French's way of relating to the wider world and inserting some (very mild) politics: "In my heart I didn't support what the men I was covering were doing." On the whole, political reference is absent from the book. The women at its center are Polish in heritage but have lost their names and identity; they are totally uninterested in anything but themselves. One thing ***Her Mother's Daughter*** does achieve is a claustrophobic sense of the kind of sealed-off existence that cannot be touched by the outside world.

Fortunately, there is no lack of mother-daughter books that offer much more. For a sharp contrast to French's sealed-off lives, I would recommend Kim Chernin's ***In My Mother's House*** (Harper Colophon, 1984). In this family, political belief and activism are paramount, and the mother and daughter's worst fight, never totally healed, occurs when Kim abandons the Communism which has been the mainstay of her mother's life. Rose Chernin tells her daughter, "Never tear yourself from the people. . . . This is our meaning. This is how we survive"—a belief that allows Rose to do

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what none of French's characters can and transcend her own mother's depression and helplessness. Rose Chernin is not idealized but emerges as one of the most vivid and compelling women in recent literature. The book is a kind of acknowledgment: a gift from a daughter who, as an adult, has not often been able to give to her mother.

In My Mother's House is, as Kim Chernin tells us, "a story of power," while *Her Mother's Daughter* is a story of powerlessness. But it is not only the "lover of happy endings" in me who prefers the former. The mother in Vivian Gornick's *Fierce Attachments* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1987) is as unfulfilled and discontented as most of French's women. Gornick's book is less a portrait of her mother than an exploration of a relationship which makes the 17-year-old Vivian think, "one of us is going to die of this attachment." And yet Gornick's book is more like Chernin's than French's in its vitality and passion and in the precision and power of its language. We are as fascinated with Gornick and her mother as they are with each other, walking through the streets of the city, using their bitter wit and unhappiness to play their game of push and pull. Like Rose Chernin, Gornick's mother never becomes a type: Each woman has a voice particular not only to her ethnic background but to her personhood.

One might justifiably ask whether it is fair to compare these openly autobiographical accounts with fiction. But I have only to think of some of my favorite mother-daughter novels to know that invented characters can be as compelling as real ones. There is Silla Boyce, the Barbadian mother in Paule Marshall's *Brown Girl, Brownstones* (Feminist Press, 1981), first published in 1959, when the subject of mothers and daughters, especially black mothers and daughters, was not yet in fashion. Silla's will and power are at war with her tenderness and longing, and her encounters with her equally strong daughter are like fire. Silla's voice is a kind of searing music welding the novel together, and the theme of merging and differentiation common to all these books could not emerge any more forcefully if this were an autobiography.

The working-class British single mother in Maureen Duffy's *That's How It Was*, first published in 1962 and reprinted by Virago in 1983, is as heroic and lovable as Rose Chernin, although her intelligence and courage are not grounded in politics or education but in an innate grace. Her struggle with poverty and tuberculosis in order to stay around for her daughter, Paddy, is unforgettable, as is Paddy herself, the only lesbian in the books I have mentioned. The language in this short book is understated and bare, a container which stretches to hold Paddy's passion and pain after her mother's death: "I'd catch myself thinking of things to tell her, seeing things in shop windows and wanting to buy them for her . . . under a lamp a woman's face is like hers for a moment, in profile, and then she turns." This mother's physical presence haunts us too, and the distinction between the novel and autobiography seems to blur: One cannot imagine a more eloquent tribute to Duffy's own mother.

Vanessa, the daughter in Carole Maso's *Ghost Dance* (North Point Press, 1986), is as much in love with her mother as Paddy is with hers, but Christine Wing's mental illness prevents her from giving her daughter what she needs to survive. This novel's difficult poetic prose is very different from the plain language of the others mentioned here. The vulnerable poet mother and the daughter whose longing for her can never be fulfilled float in a symbolic sea of images: When Christine gets ready to go away, Vanessa's world gradually loses its color until everything is white. Toward the end of the book, Maso loses her hold on the plot, but the flaws of her novel stem from her courage in exploring new territory.

It is interesting that even Christine Wing, with her anguished life, has a special insight and integrity: She is never just a victim. The mothers in all these books are portrayed with a passion and energy which is also a form of respect—and which is conspicuously lacking in *Her Mother's Daughter*. Still, even that is not quite enough to explain why I should feel so uncharitable toward French's novel. It's a depressed and depressing book but not a destructive one; and Marilyn French, even at her lowest ebb, is a good enough storyteller to make most people want to read to the end.

My answer, finally, is that I am a daughter. My mother writes me long letters but finds it hard to spend time with me unless I am happy. I want her love and approval with a longing that can never be fully met; at the same time, I have nightmares about becoming her. As I achieve and as I fail, I feel my mother leaning over my shoulder, critical or approving. When my mother writes or speaks of her own mother, now dead, she expresses the same pain, the same crazy mixture of love and hate. When I talk to my lovers and friends, I hear it all again. We need books about mothers and daughters, but if they are to help us understand and heal the wounds, they must speak of our mothers with respect, with passion and with insight. Such books are being written and published by small presses in small editions that go rapidly out of print. Meanwhile, we are served *Her Mother's Daughter.* □

BOOK NOTES.

ANTHONY BORDEN

SEPARATE PASTS: Growing Up White in the Segregated South. *By Melton A. McLaurin. University of Georgia Press. 164 pp. $13.95.*

A CLASS DIVIDED: Then and Now. *By William Peters. Yale University Press. 172 pp. $25. Paper $8.95.*

In *Separate Pasts*, Melton A. McLaurin describes his youth in the 1950s in Wade, North Carolina, population 1,000. Part remembrance, part sociology, the book makes an adolescent's confusions illuminate much of the moral confusion of white society. Spending the first eighteen years of his life in this small farming town, attending a segregated school but often hanging out at or running his grandfather's store near the black section of town, McLaurin was drilled in rigid racial codes even while he became close to many blacks. Through portraits of dozens of acquaintances, white and black, family members and transients, McLaurin explains the lessons he learned—and unlearned—from each.

Although the book's title suggests the division between whites and blacks imposed by segregation, *Separate Pasts* is also the story of McLaurin's gradual alienation from his family and from the white community of which he was a member in good standing. The book is a deep-

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ly personal chronicle of the Southern way of life, but in no way an apology.

One of the book's main strengths comes from its being, in many places, as textured as a novel. But McLaurin is a historian, not a novelist, and he resolutely checks his narrative at every turn. Street, the unschooled black man who lives in a cave but teaches young Melton the rewards of intellectual independence; Betty Jo, the sensitive but untouchable local black girl; and the looming and controversial granddaddy, who fills the boy with love and fear—all are characters in a fiction that never takes off.

Particularly in the powerful short story of Bobo, a black playmate, McLaurin displays his ability for both drama and analysis. This is the South of the 1950s, and even the store owner's boy can find only a poor excuse for a basketball, which will not hold air and needs to be carted to the pump to be reinflated every half hour. During one such impatient break in the action, one boy held the ball while Bobo soaked the needle with saliva to provide the necessary lubrication. But the two fumbled, unable to insert it into the valve, so Melton grabbed the needle for his own try, first putting it into his mouth. In that second, McLaurin writes:

> I was jolted by one of the most shattering emotional experiences of my young life. Instantaneously an awareness of the shared racial prejudices of generations of white society coursed through every nerve of my body. . . . The needle in my mouth . . . had been purposely drenched with Negro spit, and that substance threatened to defile my entire being. . . . These black germs would ravage my body with unspeakable diseases, diseases from the tropics, Congo illnesses that would rot my limbs, contort my body with pain.

Having tapped that well of fear, Melton begins to understand the full complexity of a white man's resentment—that a black could hold so much emotional power over him. Slamming the ball into Bobo's stomach, to the other players' surprise, Melton retreated to the spigot on the other side of the store, where clear water cleansed his gullet, cooled his temper and allowed him to regain his composure. Bobo was offered no explanation, and after a moment of awkwardness the game was resumed.

The night of Martin Luther King's assassination, Jane Elliott, a third-grade teacher in Riceville, Iowa, devised a plan to teach her students about discrimination. She divided the students by eye

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color and on alternate days declared one group intellectually and morally superior, while degrading and restricting the activities of the other. In this way she intended to demonstrate to an all-white class in an all-white town both the nastiness of racially based claims of superiority and the demoralization suffered by victims of racism. Her work prompted two award-winning television documentaries, *The Eye of the Storm* (1970) and *A Class Divided* (1984), both produced by William Peters. There was also a book, written by Peters, which is now expanded to cover the high-school reunion of that third-grade class, as well as Elliott's efforts to bring her teaching method to adults, particularly corrections officers.

The book is more or less a transcription of the films, along with some behind-the-scenes information. For those who do not have access to the documentaries, it is a straightforward description of this peculiar experiment. As half the students jeer and grin, the other half slump miserable in their chairs while Elliott lays out the tyrannical lesson plan: brown-eyed children are to sit at the front, go to lunch first and have a longer recess; the blue-eyes may not climb on the playground equipment, have second servings or drink directly from the water fountain but are required to use paper cups. As the day goes on, the teacher never misses an opportunity to raise the stakes by pointing out the brilliance of a brown-eyed child or the incompetence of a blue-eyed. Within an hour, the "superior" children are found to excel academically; they draw happy, smiling pictures of themselves and devise further methods to assure the degradation of their unfortunate classmates. The "inferior" ones are distracted at their work, cowed and inert on the playground and unable to mount any resistance to their plight except for the futile violence described by one child after lunch: "Russell called me names, and I hit him. Hit him in the gut. . . . [He called me] brown eyes."

On the following day, when the roles are reversed, so is the behavior, with similar though perhaps softened results because those in power now have a better understanding of the opposite group's situation. When the day is over, the reunited class sings and cries. Elliott reassures them, praises them and leads them in a discussion of how racial discrimination must feel: "Like you're in prison and they threw away the key," one boy says. And in that chorus of good feeling, it's possible to imagine that Elliott has indeed found a way to sensitize people to discrimination.

The experiment with adults, which Elliott ran at the request of the Iowa Department of Corrections, is similar, although it lasted only a day and the roles weren't reversed.

As a document, *A Class Divided: Then and Now* is moving and instructive, showing how unbridling the inhibitions to domination can so quickly lead to discriminating behavior amazing in its complexity. Best friends one day can on the next be urged to carry out the worst cruelties or be driven to serious self-doubt. "It's a simple enough equation," Elliott explains: "Choose a group, discriminate against it, force it by your discrimination to look and act inferior, and then point to the way it looks and acts as proof of its inferiority."

True, but as an experiment, a number of reservations come to mind. Elliott is a sensitive group leader, and the students appeared game enough. But she is in no way qualified to measure the deep psychological effects that are precisely her purpose, and are as likely as not to go awry. In particular, the blue-eyed child with the brown-eyed father comes to mind. At the end of two painful, perhaps damaging days, he seemed to have learned not about racial solidarity but about some bizarre familial miscegenation.

The primary justification Elliott and Peters provide for the experiment, with the introductory blessing of Kenneth Clark, displays just the kind of breezy analysis that would make a parent cringe. At the high-school reunion of the third-grade class, the young men and women, now in their early 20s, review the 1970 documentary and testify to its lasting effect in cleansing them of prejudice. Peters, while admitting the artificiality of the staged discussion, concludes: "The mini-reunion . . . brought proof that [Elliott's] two-day lesson in discrimination had significantly changed their lives. These were young adults who clearly had been inoculated against racism—and every other kind of invidious discrimination."

Elliott and Peters credit the civil rights movement with inspiring their experiment, but not with influencing its subjects, and they also fail to consider the personal histories of the graduates, almost all of whom had moved away from white Riceville. After all, it was Melton McLaurin's relationships with blacks that taught him so much, even in the South of the 1950s. Ultimately it is McLaurin and not Elliott who remains mindful of the long-term approaches that combating racism requires. □

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MUSIC.

GENE SANTORO

John Zorn

A dozen years after he first began playing his music in New York City's East Village, composer/saxophonist John Zorn is still living on the economic and musical margins of mainstream culture, but with an ironic twist. More and more, his idiosyncratic mixtures of musical genres reflect the way popular music is currently transmitted from one culture to another. This is not vapid New Ageism—no transcendentalist goals lurk in Zorn's closet—and even eclectic is far too weak a word to describe his intensely demanding yet playful sonic assaults. If a whiff of *épater le bourgeoisie* hovers about his work, it's not there just to titillate or shock, but to raise questions and rearrange expectations about how music can go about being whatever it is.

Zorn has been honing his attack on that vast subject ever since his Webster College days in the early 1970s, when he encountered the Chicago-based A.A.C.M. and its St. Louis analogue, the Black Artists Group, one of whose leading lights, sax man Oliver Lake, taught at Webster. And so Zorn was introduced to Anthony Braxton, Roscoe Mitchell and Leo Smith, who were exploring different ways of mixing freedom and form. He describes the influence of these musicians in helping him break free of the traditional classical mold: "I began incorporating improvisation into some of the structures I'd been working on, which ranged

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from traditionally notated stuff like Elliot Carter, and Charles Ives, and Edgard Varese–influenced pieces to improvisational works coming more from John Cage or Earle Brown or Stockhausen."

That combination of elements created some unusual strategies, such as the game structures Zorn employed in pieces like *Archery* and *Cobra* to decenter both the process of improvising and the composition itself.

> The game pieces are meant for improvisers working in a live situation. They weren't really meant to be recorded because they're like a sport—it's an exciting thing to see, it's very visual when all the musicians are making signs at each other, trying to get each other's attention. . . . My role there was to set up rules so that the people in the band have to make decisions, have to communicate. All I'm concerned with there is that people make the most possible decisions in the smallest amount of time, so that everything is jam-packed together and the music changes incredibly fast.

Despite Zorn's anarchic approaches to the nexus of improvisation and composition, there are two attributes that virtually all Zorn pieces share. The first is their collaborative nature—Zorn works with a group of players he calls his family who use their own talents and insights to fill in and even alter the outlines the leader has sketched. As he puts it in the liner notes for his new release, *Spillane*,

> Whether we like it or not, the era of the composer as autonomous musical mind has just about come to an end. . . . Over the past 40 years, many of the great composers have worked with collaborators. Ellington had Billy Strayhorn as well as his amazing band, John Cage had David Tudor and Takehisa Kosugi. . . . Philip Glass and Steve Reich work closely with their ensembles. The collaborative aspects of the recording process make this even clearer.

(One way Zorn keeps his "family's" collaborative energy alive is by cutting the musicians equal slices of the royalties.)

The other attribute structuring Zorn's work is its velocity. Zorn's art of the quick change and the juxtaposition of the apparently incongruous—a baroque harpsichord flourish next to a slew of guitar screeches or a circus motif or a strangled human cry or computer-generated bleeps, a rumba pattern alongside a bit of shakuhachi or a Brazilian *batucada* ensemble or diced-up fragments of Beethoven's "Für Elise"—finds its best analogy in the jump cuts and channel-hopping so natural to the first generation that grew up on TV. Not so incidentally, it is also a provocative representation of and challenge to the bombardment of atomized information that marks life in the late twentieth century.

If you keep these emphases in mind, it's not surprising to find that Zorn's most recent recordings, last year's *The Big Gundown* and the recently issued *Spillane*, in a certain sense spend their time at the movies and watching TV. The first LP collects key players on the East Village scene—guitarists Robert Quine, Jody Harris, Bill Frisell, Vernon Reid, Fred Frith and Arto Lindsay, turntable mixer Christian Marclay, altoist Tim Berne, accordionist Guy Klucevsek, bassist Melvin Gibbs, keyboardists Anthony Coleman and Wayne Horvitz and percussionists Bobby Previte and Anton Fier—for brash and witty reworkings of music by spaghetti-Western scorer Ennio Morricone. Zorn takes the Italian's brooding, twangy atmospherics, themselves witty reworkings of Duane Eddy and the Ventures, and twists them into scorching surrealism, redistributing the voicings of the original charts over utterly different instruments and players to produce wild, apocalyptic renditions that refract the still-recognizable material. If the album's working title was *Once Upon a Time in the East Village*, it's because the jagged atonal bursts of noise alternating with moodier, more melodic passages capture what Morricone might have written had he been exiled to these margins rather than his own Leone-imagined Wild West.

Spillane's mosaic title piece—it charges through sixty sections in its twenty-five minutes—traffics in variants of the moody, *noir*ish sounds that accompanied TV detectives in the 1950s. The piece grew out of several Zorn obsessions: detective fiction, New York City, sleazy soundtracks and jazz. Another species of Zorn composition is represented here by "Two Lane Highway,"

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

Spillane (Elektra/Nonesuch)
Cobra (hat Art)
The Sonny Clark Memorial Quartet/Voodoo (Black Saint)
The Big Gundown (Icon/Nonesuch)
Ganryu Island (Yukon)

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the "portrait" of blues guitarist Albert Collins. Here Collins teams up with Zorn family members like Quine, Gibbs, Horvitz and Previte as well as keyboard master Big John Patton and drummer Ronald Shannon Jackson. While the piece's dozen sections move from shuffle blues to funk to New Orleans r&b in alternation with rip-'em-up rumbles, they build a powerful impetus; it peaks with its allusion to the classic organ-trio format in a segment that unites Texans Collins and Jackson with Kansas City–born Patton, all of them using their regions' long blues traditions in very different ways.

While Zorn may be best known as a composer/arranger, his alto sax playing is as changeable and supple as his writing. There are the duck calls and squeals (often generated by his literally deconstructed sax) on pieces like *Ganryu Island,* his alternately melodic and raucous duo with shamisen master Michihiro Sato. Then there are the freewheeling Ornette Coleman tributes Zorn stages with fellow altoist Tim Berne at clubs like The Knitting Factory. Or there is the bop-based but idiosyncratic fluidity displayed on *The Sonny Clark Memorial Quartet/Voodoo.* "People don't realize Wayne [Horvitz] and I had been playing Sonny Clarke's music for years before we cut that record," he complains. "It was exciting because nobody thought I could play saxophone like that; I figured people would think somebody else must have done it."

But he's ready to expand his jazz-based activity. Early 1988 should see the release of *News for Lulu*, a trio date where Zorn, guitar genius Frisell and trombone great George Lewis tackle tunes by boppers Hank Mobley and Kenny Dorham. Along with innovators like Henry Threadgill, whom he admires a great deal, Zorn disdains pseudo-traditionalism. "Be-bop is not just running changes the way Sonny Stitt or Bird did; there's no point to just copying that, you can take out the record and play it if that's what you want to hear. It's tunes and changes and a certain tradition that needs to be updated to keep it alive. I think that music is great today, and I'm trying to play it today." □

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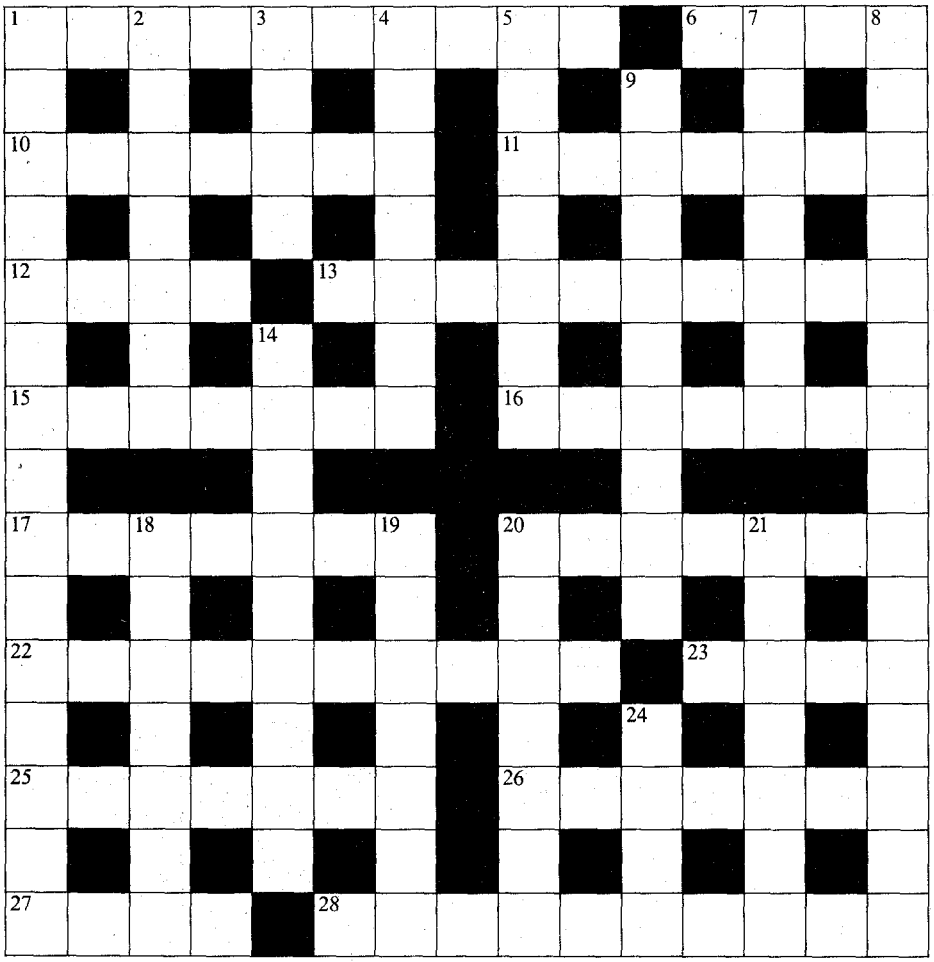

ACROSS

1 and 6 Does one have a burning desire to drop it? (10,4)
10 The thing that guides a horse in that matter? (7)
11 A call with a license that doesn't get seen, in a way—that's the stuff for the artist! (7)
12 Returns somewhat mad, as they say, in the name of love! (4)
13 Tumbleweed might be for the amaranth—just like Smith! (6,4)
15 A man's has a wizardly place in it—but certainly not for fighting men! (7)
16 This sort of cop is as likely to be associated with a blue period. (7)
17 What they had in River City? (A fragment comes back sort of blue.) (7)
20 What you may be looking for herein picks up the phone when it rings. (7)
22 Created in return, what is said for photogenic reasons to be food. (4,6)
23 What turns to show part of the island chain? (4)
25 The lover, eating his heart out, evinces what we shouldn't do. (7)
26 The natural environment of a constituent part. (7)
27 To ask, when nothing is removed, for work? (4)
28 It takes nerve, commonly, with the highest card on an example of the crabby type. (10)

DOWN

1 Is there nothing beyond Las Vegas if you are, finally? (2,3,4,6)
2 The city of romance, and of violins. (7)
3 Coward, perhaps, having a lack of city transportation. (4)
4 Fiery sort of genius, needing nothing. (7)
5 A so-called dumb girl is confused, to begin with, but Pam comes up with something to show the way. (4,3)
7 Made by the sound of it in France—specifically of this. (7)
8 Daisy's relative shows the composer has difficult roles, however is finally not up to it. (9,6)
9 What the police call a persistent complainer might just imply housing for car, in part. (9)
14 Is Sinding or Bach ever likely to reveal one the Russians have to follow? (9)
18 Wild beasts, but not necessarily groaners. (7)
19 Night club bouncer might provide a way of getting rid of the shells. (7)
20 A sailor's bad luck with the Irish might be quite a sore spot. (7)
21 One of the things far-out people go to. (7)
24 Something that might be laid on a type of ray. (4)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

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